









T H E  
**Parliamentary Register;**  
O R  
H I S T O R Y  
O F T H E  
PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES  
O F T H E  
**HOUSE OF COMMONS;**

CONTAINING AN ACCOUNT OF

The most interesting SPEECHES and MOTIONS; accurate  
Copies of the most remarkable LETTERS and PAPERS;  
of the most material EVIDENCE, PETITIONS, &c.  
laid before and offered to the HOUSE,

DURING THE  
THIRD SESSION of the SEVENTEENTH PARLIAMENT  
O F  
G R E A T B R I T A I N.

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V O L. XXXIV.

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L O N D O N .

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M.DCC.XCIII.



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# I N D E X

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## DEBATES AND PROCEEDINGS

## IN THE

## HOUSE OF COMMONS.

### VOLUME XXXIV.

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THE  
HISTORY  
OF THE  
PROCEEDINGS AND DEBATES  
OF THE  
HOUSE OF COMMONS,

In the THIRD SESSION of the  
Seventeenth Parliament of GREAT BRITAIN,

Appointed to be holden at WESTMINSTER,  
On THURSDAY the 25th of NOVEMBER, 1790.

*Thursday, 13th December, 1792.*

**T**HIS being the day appointed by His Majesty's proclamation for assembling the Parliament, at three o'clock the Gentleman Usher of the Black Rod appeared, and informed the House, that His Majesty commanded their attendance in the House of Lords.

The SPEAKER, attended by several Members, went to the House of Peers accordingly, and returned.

Mr. ROSE moved, that a new writ be issued for the University of Cambridge, in the room of the right honourable William Pitt, who, since his election, had accepted of the office of Lord Warden of the Cinque Ports. Ordered.

The SPEAKER stated that the clerk had, according to annual practice, prepared a bill for preventing clandestine out-

lawries. The bill was read a first time. The Speaker was next proceeding to read the King's speech, when he was prevented by

Mr. JEKYLL, who said he was sorry that, on this occasion, he must depart from the usual order of proceeding in the House, and instead of waiting to hear His Majesty's speech read, and a motion made for an address in return for it, to call the attention of Parliament to a subject of great importance, as it involved no less a question, than that of the legality of the subsequent acts of the session. What he meant to submit to their consideration was a matter of privilege, and consequently ought to supersede every other business whatever. The House, he observed, being then met under very extraordinary circumstances, the first question which must naturally suggest itself to every gentleman's mind, was, "By what authority was it actually sitting?" According to the *Lex et consuetudo Parliamenti*, by which alone, till of late years, the meeting of Parliament was regulated, it could not be called together at an earlier day than that to which it had been last prorogued; and no prorogation could be for a shorter period than forty days. The present meeting was clearly contrary to the law and usage of Parliament, and a reason ought to be assigned for this departure from them. In a book published by a learned gentleman, who had long filled with great ability an office at the table of that House, (Mr. Hatfel, the head clerk) it appeared that there was one precedent for such a departure, and that was in the reign of Charles II., when the Dutch, sailing up the Medway, burnt some of our ships at Chatham. At that time there was a recess of Parliament, which had been prorogued from July to the month of October. The measure of calling it together before the expiration of the prorogation, was debated in Council, where Lord Clarendon declared that it was illegal, and suggested that the best way to proceed on the occasion, would be to dissolve the Parliament, and call a new one, which could meet in a short time, as it was not then required by law that so long a period, as was at present necessary, should elapse between the *teste* and the return of the writs. Lord Clarendon, however, was over-ruled, and it was determined that the Parliament should be called pending the prorogation, and before the expiration of it. He presumed it was not on the authority

of this solitary precedent that Ministers would rest the legality of the present meeting. They, no doubt, would plead the authority of statute for their departure from common law.— There were two acts passed in the present reign, which authorised the King to summon, by proclamation, a meeting of the Parliament, at the expiration of fourteen days from the date of the same, notwithstanding any prorogation or adjournment for a longer period. One of these acts gave this authority to the Crown, to be exercised in case of actual invasion. The other, which was passed in the 26th of Geo. III. chap. 10, extended it to cases of rebellion and insurrection. Here, for the first time, the word “insurrection” was used. How it had crept into the act, whether by the same negligence with which the Lords’ act had crept out last session, he could not tell. As no invasion had taken place, he presumed that as Ministers had in the King’s speech made mention of insurrections, it was on this latter statute that they meant to rest the defence of a measure, which could be legal only in the specified cases, and in every other was contrary to the law and usage of Parliament. He wished, therefore, that those who were best qualified to clear up what was obscure and doubtful on this head, would point out where and when this insurrection had taken place, which alone could make the present a legal meeting of Parliament, and render its subsequent acts valid and binding on the people. On the explanation which he should receive on this head, he said, it would depend whether he should make a specific motion on the subject or not. If he should hear a satisfactory reason assigned for this extraordinary meeting, he would acquiesce in it; if not, he should think it his duty to submit to the House a proposition on a point which, viewed in every light, was of the greatest importance to the country.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS observed, that by the 26th of George III. chap. 10, His Majesty had, clearly and expressly, a power to call out the militia, in certain cases, during a prorogation; and whenever he exercised that power, he was bound to call Parliament together within fourteen days. The legality of the meeting, and of the subsequent acts of legislation, did not depend, in the smallest degree, upon the truth of the allegations on which Ministers should advise the Crown to call out the militia; for in the statute which had been al-



ready mentioned, there was a specific clause legalizing every act which the Parliament should pass, after having been assembled before the expiration of a prorogation. The validity of its acts would therefore not depend on the truth or falsehood of the grounds on which the meeting might have been advised by Ministers. Whether Ministers were right or wrong in advising the measure, was another question; and probably a satisfactory answer would be given to it in the course of the debate upon the address. If what should then be said should happen not to prove satisfactory to the learned gentleman, it would be perfectly open to him on any other day, to move for an inquiry into the conduct of Ministers on this head; but he begged that it might be generally understood, that the legality of the present meeting, and of the future acts of the session, was completely out of the question.

Mr. FOX said, he agreed perfectly with Mr. Dundas, that Parliament could legally and with perfect regularity in point of form, proceed to business; the calling out of the militia having enabled the King to assemble them in fourteen days. Thus it stood in point of regularity; but he could not think that Parliament would meet upon the principles of justice or common sense, and proceed to any business whatever, before they had investigated the truth of the proclamation by which they were convened. What spur of business was it that required such precipitancy? How could they answer to their constituents for implicitly proceeding upon assertions in a proclamation without proof? This was changing into a cause that which was only a pretence—He had no objection indeed first to vote an address of thanks to His Majesty for his gracious speech: but then he would vote it in the simplest terms possible, and take care not to pledge the House to any strong measure, until it should have been made to appear, that the cause of the present meeting was such, as would warrant so extraordinary a departure from the usual forms. Could the house with propriety, with common honesty, proceed to a business, upon an assertion of an insurrection, without examining the pretence? He could not conceive that it could be the intention of any man in that House to proceed in that way. Nor did he think there were any in that House who believed there was any insurrection. He was in hopes the answer would have been

clear and distinct. He thought it would have said at once there was a notorious insurrection, and that Ministers would have stated where the insurrection existed, but they pointed out no such thing. This was a case in which Parliament could not suppose there was an insurrection. If no other Member did, he should move, in the course of this night, something that might tend to express a proper feeling in the House upon this subject.

The SPEAKER informed the House that he had attended His Majesty in the House of Lords, for the purpose of hearing His Majesty's most gracious speech from the throne, of which, to prevent mistakes, he had obtained a copy, which he should proceed to read to the House:

His Majesty's most gracious Speech to both Houses of Parliament.

My Lords, and Gentlemen,

*HAVING judged it necessary to embody a part of the militia of this kingdom, I have, in pursuance of the provisions of the law, called you together within the time limited for that purpose, and it is, on every account, a great satisfaction to me to meet you in Parliament at this conjuncture.*

*I should have been happy if I could have announced to you the secure and undisturbed continuance of all the blessings which my subjects have derived from a state of tranquillity; but events have recently occurred which require our united vigilance and exertion, in order to preserve the advantages which we have hitherto enjoyed.*

*The seditious practices which had been in a great measure checked by your firm and explicit declaration in the last session, and by the general concurrence of my people in the same sentiments, have of late been more openly renewed, and with increased activity. A spirit of tumult and disorder (the natural consequence of such practices) has shewn itself in acts of riot and insurrection, which required the interposition of a military force in support of the civil magistrate. The industry employed to excite discontent on various pretexts, and in different parts of the kingdom, has appeared to proceed from a design to attempt the destruction of our happy constitution, and the subversion of all order and government; and this design has evidently been pursued in connection and concert with persons in foreign countries.*

*I have carefully observed a strict neutrality in the present war on the Continent, and have uniformly abstained from any interference with respect to the internal affairs of France; but it is impossible for me to see, without the most serious uneasiness, the strong and increasing indications which have appeared there of an intention to excite disturbances in other countries, to disregard the rights of neutral nations, and to pursue views of conquest and aggrandisement, as well as to adopt towards my allies the States General, (who have observed the same neutrality with myself) measures which are neither conformable to the law of nations, nor to the positive stipulations of existing treaties. Under all these circumstances, I have felt it my indispensable duty to have recourse to those means of prevention and internal defence with which I am entrusted by law; and I have also thought it right to take steps for making some augmentation of my naval and military force, being persuaded that these exertions are necessary in the present state of affairs, and are best calculated both to maintain internal tranquillity, and to render a firm and temperate conduct effectual for preserving the blessings of peace.*

*Nothing will be neglected on my part that can contribute to that important object consistently with the security of my kingdoms, and with the faithful performance of engagements which we are bound equally by interest and honour to fulfil.*

Gentlemen of the House of Commons,

*I have ordered the estimates for the ensuing year to be laid before you; and I have no doubt that you will be ready to make a due provision for the several branches of the public service.*

*You will certainly join with me in lamenting any necessity for extraordinary expences, which may for a time prevent the application of additional sums beyond those which are already annually appropriated to the reduction of the public debt, or retard the relief which my subjects might have derived from a further diminution of taxes: but I am confident you will feel that those great ends will ultimately be best promoted by such exertions as are necessary for our present and future safety and tranquillity; and it is a great consolation to me to reflect, that you will find ample resources for effectually defraying the expence of vigorous preparations, from the excess of the actual revenue beyond the ordinary expenditure.*

My Lords, and Gentlemen,

*I have great pleasure in acquainting you, that the brilliant successes of the British arms in India, under the able conduct of the Marquis Cornwallis, have led to the termination of the war by an advantageous and honourable peace, the terms of which are peculiarly satisfactory to me, from their tendency to secure the future tranquillity of the British dominions in that part of the world.*

*Your attention will now naturally be directed to such measures for the future government of those valuable possessions, as shall appear, from experience and full consideration, most likely to provide for their internal prosperity, and to secure the important advantages which may be derived from thence to the commerce and revenue of this country.*

*I am persuaded that it will be the object of your immediate consideration to adopt such measures as may be necessary, under the present circumstances, for enforcing obedience to the laws, and for repressing every attempt to disturb the peace and tranquillity of these kingdoms.*

*You will be sensible how much depends on the result of your deliberations, and your uniform conduct is the best pledge that nothing will be wanting on your part which can contribute to the present security and permanent advantage of the country.*

*I retain a deep and unalterable sense of the repeated proofs which I have received of your cordial and affectionate attachment to me ; and I place an entire reliance on the continuance of those sentiments, as well as on your firm determination to defend and maintain that constitution which has so long protected the liberties and promoted the happiness of every class of my subjects.*

*In endeavouring to preserve and to transmit to posterity the inestimable blessings which, under the favour of Providence, you have yourselves experienced, you may be assured of my zealous and cordial co-operation ; and our joint efforts will, I doubt not, be rendered completely effectual, by the decided support of a free and loyal people.*

The SPEAKER having read His Majesty's speech,

Mr. JENKINSON rose, he said, to propose an address to the Throne, in the absence——

[Here he was interrupted by a Member appearing to be sworn—during which the Lord Mayor entered, and took his seat.]

The LORD MAYOR said, that trusting to the candid and liberal indulgence afforded by this House to a new speaker, he rose to move an humble address to His Majesty, for his most gracious speech from the throne ; and was extremely sorry that he had detained the House so very long, owing to an interruption in the streets, quite unavoidable, and not from any failure in that respect and attention which he felt as due to the House.

Inexperienced in the forms of parliamentary proceeding, and unpractised in the rules of the House, he should not, however, have presumed to come forward on this occasion, but on account of the very responsible situation which he had the honour to hold in another place, having given him general and material information on the points to which he should request the favour of their attention, and which went directly to support the address.

His Majesty's proclamation, at the termination of the last session, concurred in equally by the House and the country, and aided in its object by the then existing circumstances on the Continent, had very considerably checked the seditious practices which had been found to prevail ; but he was scarcely seated in the Mayoralty chair, before he became possessed of a variety of information, through different channels, which convinced him that the same mischievous attempts were renewed with augmented force, under a material change of affairs in another country.

Numerous societies being established within the city of London, corresponding and confederating with other societies in different parts of the united kingdoms, all formed under specious pretences, but actually tending to subvert the constitution of the country. Those societies, so connected, concerted and executed the means very industriously and unremittingly of circulating, gratis, a great variety of poisonous and pernicious pamphlets and publications, accommodated to the perusal of the meanest capacity, and manifestly tending to create doubt and discontent in the minds of the lower classes of his fellow-subjects, and by a slow but sure means, to alienate their minds from their allegiance to the King, and from their attachment to the Constitution, as established by law.

Under these circumstances, and recollecting also the fatal consequences of insurrection, and the want of timely exertion,

some years ago in the capital, and recollecting likewise the calamities which have more recently overwhelmed the metropolis of a neighbouring kingdom, from an apparent want of precaution, he felt himself bound in duty to put his affectionate fellow-citizens on their guard; and the manly and decided manner in which they had seconded him, had given vigour to his feeble efforts, and would hand down their names to posterity with additional credit and applause.

The city of London, he said, by its patriotism and prudence on many former occasions, had given birth to the noblest exertions of the people; and their loyal, seasonable, and determined conduct at this important crisis, aided by the firm and temperate measures of prevention adopted by the executive Government, has brought back tranquillity to the city; and the societies alluded to have in consequence altered their measures, and they are now conducted less openly and more cautiously, but are on that account, as he thought, the more dangerous, and ought to be the more watched.

In the mean time, he believed he might venture to aver, that his fellow-citizens had seen, with satisfaction and thankfulness, the paternal care of His Majesty for the safety and welfare of his people, and the wise and salutary precautions taken by the executive Government to preserve the public happiness at this period.

Beneficial, therefore, as those preparations have been with respect to internal commotion, they may be found still more useful and provident, if applied to external danger. He alluded here principally to the situation of our old ally the States General of the United Provinces; for if measures have been, or are to be pursued, as respecting them, repugnant to the law of nations, and to the positive ties of treaties, approved by this House and the country, the House would easily see that we ought to interpose, and that we are, by these preparations, the better able to do so with effect.

He was happy, in the mean time, to be informed, that the excess of the annual revenue beyond the ordinary expenditure, would amply provide for vigorous preparations, sincerely lamenting, in common with every Member in the House, that no farther diminution of the existing taxes, nor any farther augmentation of the fund for the reduction of the national debt,

beyond the annual million, could, for the present, be expected ; but gentlemen would see, that the best means for attaining those important objects, undoubtedly must be the prosecution of such measures as would best secure the public tranquillity permanently.

It might be proper, he observed, before he sat down, to say a few words on the glorious conclusion of the late war in India. But he would not detain the House, by adding his tribute to the general approbation of the nation, as to the patient bravery of the army, or the able conduct of Marquis Cornwallis, whose valour, perseverance, and moderation, were so universally acknowledged and felt ; but he should leave a more full discussion of all these topics to the honourable gentleman near him. He thanked the House for the attention with which they had honoured him, and said, that without trespassing farther on their time, he would proceed to read his motion, " That the following humble address be presented to His Majesty :"

Most Gracious Sovereign,

*WE, your Majesty's most dutiful and loyal subjects, the Commons of Great Britain, in Parliament assembled, beg leave to return your Majesty our hearty thanks, for your most gracious speech from the throne.*

*It would have afforded us the most sincere satisfaction if your Majesty could have announced to us the secure and undisturbed continuance of all the blessings, which your Majesty's subjects have derived from a state of tranquillity; but we are fully sensible that events have recently occurred, which must require our united vigilance and exertion to preserve to this country the advantages which it has hitherto enjoyed.*

*It has been impossible for us not to perceive, from our own observation in different parts of the country, the increased activity with which seditious practices have of late been openly renewed; and we learn, with concern, that not only a spirit of tumult and disorder (the natural consequence of such practices) has shewn itself in acts of riot and insurrection, which required the interposition of a military force in support of the civil Magistrate, but that the industry employed to excite discontent has appeared to proceed from a design to attempt, in concert with persons in foreign coun-*

tries, the destruction of our happy constitution, and the subversion of all order and government.

*We entertain a just sense of the temper and prudence which have induced your Majesty to observe a strict neutrality with respect to the war on the continent, and uniformly to abstain from any interference in the internal affairs of France; but, at the same time, we cannot but participate in the just uneasiness with which your Majesty must observe any indications of an intention to excite disturbances in other countries, to disregard the rights of neutral nations, and to pursue views of conquest and aggrandizement, and particularly to adopt measures towards your Majesty's allies the states general, inconsistent with the law of nations, and the positive stipulations of existing treaties.*

*The circumstances, which your Majesty has been pleased to communicate to us, appear to have rendered it highly important, for the safety and interest of this country, that your Majesty should have recourse to those measures of prevention, and internal defence, with which your Majesty is entrusted by law.*

*We sincerely hope that these exertions, and the steps which your Majesty has taken for augmenting your naval and military force, will have the happy tendency both to maintain internal tranquillity, and to render a firm and temperate conduct effectual for preserving the blessings of peace.*

*Your Majesty may, at the same time, rely on our zealous concurrence in such measures as may prove to be necessary for the security of these kingdoms, and for the faithful performance of our engagements.*

*We shall proceed to make such provisions as shall be requisite for the several branches of the public service.*

*We must indeed see, with the deepest regret, any necessity for extraordinary expences, which may prevent the application of additional sums, beyond those already annually appropriated, to the reduction of the public debt, or retard the farther relief which your Majesty's subjects might derive from a diminution of taxes; but we are fully aware that those great ends (to which our views must anxiously be directed) will themselves ultimately be best promoted by such vigorous and timely exertions as may be necessary*



for our present and future safety and tranquillity; and it will, undoubtedly, be a great consolation to us to find, that the excess of the actual revenue, beyond the ordinary expenditure, is such as to furnish ample resources for effectually defraying the expences of vigorous preparations, if the circumstances of the time should render such preparations requisite.

*We* beg leave to offer to your Majesty our cordial congratulations on the brilliant successes of the British arms in India, under the able conduct of the Marquis Cornwallis, and on the termination of the war in that country by an advantageous and honourable peace, which can, in no respect, be more satisfactory than in its tendency to secure the future tranquillity of the British dominions in that part of the world: we shall not fail to employ our utmost attention, with a view to taking such measures for the future Government of those valuable possessions, as shall appear, from experience and full consideration, most likely to provide for their internal prosperity, and to secure the important advantages which may be derived from thence to the commerce and revenue of this country.

Your Majesty may depend upon the zeal and readiness with which we shall enter on the consideration of any measures which may appear to be necessary, under the present circumstances, for enforcing obedience to the laws, and for repressing every attempt to disturb the peace and tranquillity of these kingdoms: and we beseech your Majesty to believe, that no endeavours will be wanting on our part, which can contribute to the present security and permanent advantage of the country.

*We* shall, on every occasion, be anxious to manifest the continuance of our dutiful and affectionate attachment to your Majesty, as well as our firm determination to defend and maintain that constitution, which has so long protected the liberties, and promoted the happiness, of every class of your Majesty's subjects. Feeling it to be our first and most essential duty to preserve and transmit to posterity the inestimable blessings which, under the favour of Providence, we have ourselves experienced.

*We* receive, with the warmest emotions of gratitude, the gracious assurances of your Majesty's zealous and cordial co-operation; and we rely with confidence on the decided support of a free and loyal people.

Mr. WALLACE seconded the motion. He said that no man could entertain a rational doubt of the propriety of every part of the speech, and of the measure of calling the Parliament together before the expiration of the term of the prorogation. The insurrections that had taken place in various parts of the kingdom, were matters of such notoriety, that it would waste time to enumerate or specify them. Publications had been circulated through the country, calculated to inflame the minds of the people, to render them dissatisfied with the present government, induce them to pull down our happy constitution, and establish in its stead another, formed on the model of the French republic. That the societies, by which these publications were circulated, must have had such a revolution for their object, could not be doubted by any man who considered that there was a close connection between them and the ruling powers in France. They kept up a correspondence with the National Convention, and even sent over deputies to it, who were received with the utmost respect, whose addresses were loudly applauded, and who were admitted with honour into the body of the house. These societies sympathised in every thing with the French; their countenances betrayed a dejection, when the Duke of Brunswick was on his march to Paris, which could be surpassed only by the extravagant joy which they expressed when he was obliged to retreat. Their connection with the French was the more alarming, as the latter professed principles dangerous to every neighbouring state; they maintained the propriety of fomenting divisions among the subjects of the surrounding nations; and held out promises of protection and support to all those who should think themselves aggrieved, and wished therefore to change the form of their government. In consequence of those principles, they had already invaded the Netherlands, and now threatened to deprive the Dutch of advantages which they had long enjoyed, which had been guaranteed to them by France herself, by England, and even by the Sovereign of the Netherlands. They could therefore have no just ground for such a proceeding; whilst we, on the other hand, were bound to fulfill our engagements with Holland specifically contracted, without inquiring why or wherefore the navigation of the

Scheldt had been secured to the Dutch. All that we had to consider on the occasion was, that they were in possession of the exclusive navigation of that river by the consent of surrounding nations, and of the House of Austria itself; and that we had pledged ourselves to maintain them in that possession. Seeing the state of affairs in this point of view, it was with great pleasure that he seconded the motion for an address made by the right honourable Magistrate, because he conceived that in so doing he was giving support to a system of Government under which the country had risen to enviable prosperity.

The Address having been thus moved and seconded, was read by the Speaker; after which

Lord FIELDING rose. He said, that it had not been often in his power to agree with Ministers, or give his approbation to their measures; on this day, however, they should have his support. The question on this occasion was not whether we should have this Minister or that Minister, but whether we should have any Government at all. The time, he observed, was come when every man who was a friend to Monarchy, and to the Constitution in Church and State, as it was established at the glorious Revolution, should speak out, and rally round the Throne. That Throne and that Constitution he was determined to defend at the hazard of every thing that was dear to him; and if Ministers stood in need of new or extraordinary powers for the preservation of both, he for one was ready to vote them; and as an earnest of his sincerity in this declaration, he gave notice that he would on Monday next move for leave to bring in a bill for suspending the Habeas-Corpus Act, as far as it should relate to the persons of foreigners.

Lord WYCOMBE declared that it was impossible for him to approve of what he did not understand, and therefore he could not give praise to Ministers, or vote an address of thanks to the King, for what was either not within his knowledge, or beyond his comprehension. But this much he was able to say, that the Speech calumniated the People of England; for so far was he from being able to discover any trace or symptom of insurrection, that the kingdom was at that very moment absolutely overflowing with loyalty. To the Constitution he was as warmly attached as any man in the nation, and

would be as ready to rally round the Throne and defend it in an hour of danger. He believed that there were very few, if any, to be found in England who entertained a serious wish to pull down the Constitution. The calamities which had befallen a neighbouring country would deter men from forming experimental governments. He knew that with respect to forms of government in general there were different opinions held in England ; but they were merely speculative, and ought not to occasion any alarm to the Ministers of the Crown, unless they were called forth into action, and made the groundwork of active measures.

It was impossible that men should think upon and discuss a question respecting forms of government, without differing from each other in opinion. It was the nature of the human mind that men should think differently ; but as long as they confined themselves to mere argument, they could not be said to afford any real ground for alarm. In a free country the utmost liberty ought to be given to speculation. He was attached to the Constitution of England, and determined to support it, not only because he thought it a good one, and because he approved of its principles, but because he was convinced it was the Constitution under which the people of the country chose to live. Where, then, he asked, was the cause of the alarm ? It was evident that it did not exist in England. Did gentlemen think that it was to be found in Scotland ? Certainly not ; for what the people of that country looked for was not a subversion, but simply a reform of the Constitution, and the removal of certain abuses or defects in the representation of the Commons. They had no hostile intentions against either the Crown or the House of Lords. Was it in Ireland that the cause for alarm might be discovered ? Certainly not ; for the claims of the Catholics of that kingdom were neither unreasonable nor inimical to the Constitution. They looked for a participation of its blessings, and not for its overthrow ; and he hoped the day was not distant when civil penalties on account of religious opinions would be at an end, when religion would be considered by the State in the light in which it ought to be viewed, as a matter between the creature and his Maker. He had heard with great sorrow that part of His Majesty's speech which adverted to the possibility of a foreign

war. There was not, in his opinion, a sufficient cause for it at present ; nor did he believe that any thing short of an actual invasion could justify a nation in entering into a foreign war. He was so very near being decidedly of that opinion, that if a motion were made for leave to bring in a bill for declaring that the country should never engage in any war, unless for the purpose of resisting an invasion, he verily believed he should vote for it. If we were bound by the treaty of 1788 to maintain to Holland the exclusive navigation of the Scheldt, and to the Stadtholder his privileges, more shame to those who entered into such an engagement. His Lordship read the third article of that treaty, which runs as follows :

“ III. His Britannic Majesty guarantees, in the most effectual manner, the hereditary Stadtholderate, as well as the office of hereditary Governor of each province, in the Serene House of Orange, with all the rights and prerogatives thereto belonging, as forming an essential part of the Constitution of the United Provinces, according to the resolutions and diplomas of the years 1747 and 1748, by virtue of which the present Stadtholder entered into possession of those offices in 1766, and was reinstated therein in 1788, engaging to maintain that form of government against all attacks and enterprises, direct or indirect, of whatsoever nature they may be.”

This article, he affirmed, amounted to a violation of the laws of nations. The office of Stadtholder, he said, was no essential part of the Republic : the Dutch might see cause for modifying or abolishing it ; but this article told them, that if ever they should presume to do such a thing, though they had an undoubted right to do it, the power of England should be sent forth in support of the Stadtholder, and against the sovereign right of the Republic. The opening of the navigation of the Scheldt did not strike him as being of sufficient consequence to justify a war with France ; were she to wish to throw open that trade to Spanish America, would it be the interest of England to prevent her ? She might even open to herself the Black Sea ; but that would not operate to the injury or exclusion of England ; for her activity and her capital would enable her to pursue the same track, and come in for a share of the advantages of the trade carried on in that quarter.

He observed, that should we unfortunately be forced into a war with France, which certainly had not provoked it by any act of hostility, or attempt to invade our territory, he did not see how we could make any impression upon that country. She had of late begun to think that a system of colonizing, and holding transmarine possessions, was not wise or politic, and therefore she would not be very solicitous about preserving her colonies, which she now considered rather as her weakness than her strength; and indeed this opinion respecting such possessions was not peculiar to France, for there were persons of great abilities who doubted much whether England would not be more powerful without her colonies than with them; for whilst on the one hand she would be sure of being able to trade with them, she would on the other find herself relieved from the enormous expence of defending them. The revolution in North America had occasioned this doubt; for our commerce with the United States was more considerable and advantageous to us at this moment than it was whilst they were parts of the British empire, and consequently when the mother country was obliged to incur the expence of defending them. We might, it was true, injure the trade of France, were we to go to war with that country; but it ought to be remembered that the more our own trade was extended, the more it would be exposed to danger. Upon the whole, he did not hesitate to declare, that in his opinion a war with France, and in the present circumstances, would be highly imprudent: he, therefore, should not be able to vote for the Address moved by the right honourable Magistrate, unless such amendment should be adopted as would remove his objections to it. Should any Member move such an amendment, he said, he would vote for it; should not such be moved, he declared he would not give any vote at all either for or against the Address.

Mr. FOX said,—Although what has fallen from the noble Lord behind me contains the substance of almost all that I have to offer, and although it produced the effects which good sense, truth, and solid argument, never fail to produce on a great body, the tacit acknowledgment of all who heard him, inasmuch, that no one seemed ready to venture to rise up in answer to his Lordship, yet I must deliver my opinion on this most imminent and most alarming occasion. I am not so little ac-

quainted with the nature of man, as not to know, that in speaking in public, in order to engage the cordial attention of the hearers, besides the efficacy of fair and candid reasoning, a man ought always to be in temper and unison with his audience. He ought to shew, that however they may differ upon points, he pursues in reality the same object as themselves, the love of truth. With this view, I shall state explicitly what are my sentiments on the subject now presented to us by the speech from the Throne. I state it then to be my opinion, that we are assembled at the most critical and most momentous crisis, not only that I never knew in the fate of this country, but that I ever read of in the history of this country—a crisis not merely interesting to ourselves and to our own condition, but to all nations and to all men—and that upon the conduct of Parliament in this crisis, depends not merely the fate of the British constitution, but of doctrines which go to the happiness and well-being of all human kind. I hope then I am in temper and unison with the House in this declaration of my sentiments; whether we agree in the motives of our sentiments we shall see; for I will as frankly, and as openly as possible, communicate my reasons for considering the present moment in this alarming light

His Majesty's speech is full of a variety of assertions, or perhaps I should not make use of the word assertions, without adding, that it has also a variety of insinuations, conveyed in the shape of assertions, which must impress every man with the most imminent apprehensions for the safety of every thing that is justly dear to Englishmen. It is our first duty to inquire into the truth of these assertions and insinuations so conveyed to us from the Throne. I am sure I need not recur to the old parliamentary usage of desiring, that when I speak by name of the King's speech, I mean to be considered as speaking of the speech of the Ministers, since no one will impute to me the want of the most true and sincere respect for His Majesty. It is the speech which His Majesty has been advised, by his confidential servants, to deliver from the throne. They are responsible for every letter of it, and to them, and them only, every observation of gentlemen is addressed. I state it, therefore, to be my firm opinion and belief, that there is not one fact asserted in His Majesty's speech which is not *false*—not one as-

sertion or insinuation which is not unfounded. Nay, I cannot be so uncandid as to believe, that even the Ministers themselves think them true. This charge upon His Majesty's Ministers is of so serious a kind, that I do not pronounce it lightly, and I desire that gentlemen will go fairly into the consideration of the subject, and manifest the proper spirit of the representatives of the people in such a moment. What the noble Lord said is most strictly true. The great prominent feature of the speech is, that it is an intolerable calumny on the people of Great Britain; an insinuation of so gross and so black a nature, that it demands the most rigorous inquiry, and the most severe punishment. The next assertion is, that there exists at this moment an insurrection in this kingdom. An insurrection!—Where is it? Where has it reared its head? Good God! an insurrection in Great Britain! No wonder that the militia were called out, and Parliament assembled in the extraordinary way in which they have been; but where is it? Two gentlemen have delivered sentiments in commendation and illustration of the speech, and yet, though this insurrection has existed for fourteen days, they have given us no light whatever, no clue, no information where to find it. The right honourable Magistrate tells us, that, in his high municipal situation, he has received certain information which he does not think proper to communicate to us. This is really carrying the doctrine of confidence to a length indeed. Not content with Ministers leading the House of Commons into the most extravagant and embarrassing situations, under the blind cover of confidence, we are now told that a municipal Magistrate has information of an insurrection, which he does not chuse to lay before the Commons of England, but which he assures us is sufficient to justify the alarm that has spread over the whole country! The honourable gentleman who seconded the motion tells us, that the “insurrections are too notorious to be described.” Such is the information which we receive from the right honourable Magistrate, and the honourable gentleman, who are selected to move and second the address. I will take upon me to say, that it is not the notoriety of the insurrections which prevents them from communicating to us the particulars, but their non-existence. The speech goes on in the same strain of calumny and falsehood, and says, the industry employed “to excite dis-



“ content on various pretexts, and in different parts of the  
“ kingdom, has appeared to proceed from a design to attempt  
“ the destruction of our happy constitution, and the subver-  
“ sion of all order and government.” I desire gentlemen to  
consider these words, and I demand of their honour and truth,  
if they believe this assertion to be founded in fact.

There have been, as I understand, and as every one must  
have heard, some slight riots in different parts, but I ask them,  
were not the various pretexts of these different tumults false,  
and used only to cover an attempt to destroy our happy consti-  
tution? I have heard of a tumult at Shields, of another at  
Leith; of some riot at Yarmouth, and of something of the  
same nature at Perth and Dundee. I ask gentlemen if they  
believe that in each of these places the avowed object of the  
complaint of the people, was not the real one---that the sailors  
at Shields, Yarmouth, &c. did not really want some increase  
of their wages, but were actuated by a design of overthrowing  
the constitution? Is there a man in England who believes  
this insinuation to be true? And in like manner of every  
other meeting, to which, in the present spirit, men may give  
the name of tumultuous assembling. I desire to know if there  
has been discovered any secret motive other than their open  
and avowed one. And yet with this conviction in our minds,  
we are called upon to declare directly our belief and persuasion  
that these things are so. We are called upon to join in the  
libel upon our constituents. The answer to the speech says,  
that we know of the tumult and disorder, but as to the actual  
insurrection, it more modestly makes us say, “ That we are  
“ sorry to hear there is an insurrection.” Of the tumults and  
disorders then we have personal knowledge; but the insurrec-  
tion we learn from His Majesty’s speech!

I do not wish to enter at length into the affairs of France;  
which make the next prominent passage in His Majesty’s  
speech; but though I do not desire to enter at much length into  
this part, I cannot conceal my sentiments on certain doctrines  
which I have heard to-night. The honourable gentleman,  
who seconded the motion, thought proper to say, as a proof  
that there existed a dangerous spirit in this country, that it was  
manifested “ by the drooping and dejected aspect of many  
“ persons, when the tidings of Dumourier’s surrender arrived

“ in England.” What, Sir, is this to be considered as a sign of discontent, and of a preference to Republican doctrines--- That men should droop, and be dejected in their spirits, when they heard that the armies of despotism had triumphed over an army fighting for liberty; if such dejection be a proof that men are discontented with the constitution of England, and leagued with foreigners in an attempt to destroy it, I give myself up to my country as a guilty man, for I freely confess that, when I heard of the surrender or retreat of Dumourier, and that there was a probability of the triumph of the armies of Austria and Prussia over the liberties of France, my spirits drooped, and I was dejected. What, Sir, could any man who loves the constitution of England, who feels its principles in his heart, wish success to the Duke of Brunswick, after reading a manifesto which violated every doctrine that Englishmen held sacred, which trampled under foot every principle of justice and humanity, and freedom, and true government; and upon which the combined armies entered the kingdom of France, with which they had nothing to do; and when he heard, or thought that he saw a probability of their success, could any man of true British feelings be other than dejected? I honestly confess that I never felt more sincere gloom and dejection in my life, for I saw in the triumph of that conspiracy not merely the ruin of liberty in France, but the ruin of liberty in England; the ruin of the liberty of man. But am I to be told that my sorrow was an evident proof of my being connected with the French nation, or with any persons in that nation; for the purpose of aiding them in creating discontents in England, or in making any attempt to destroy the British constitution? If such conclusion were to be drawn from the dejection of those who are hostile to the maxims of tyranny, upon which the invasion of France was founded, what must we say of those men who acknowledge that they are sorry the invasion did not prosper? Am I to believe that the honourable gentleman, and all others, who confess their sorrow at the failure of Prussia and Austria, were connected with the Courts in concert, and that a considerable body of persons in this country were actually in the horrid league formed against human liberty? Are we taught to bring this heavy charge against all men, whose spirits drooped on the reverse of the news, and

when it turned out that it was not Dumourier, but the Duke of Brunfwick who had retreated? No; he would not charge them with being confederates with the invaders of France; nor did they believe, nor durst they believe, that the really constitutional men of England, who rejoiced on the overthrow of that horrid and profligate scheme, wished to draw therefrom any thing hostile to the established Government of England.

But what, Sir, are the doctrines that they desire to set up by this insinuation of gloom and dejection? That Englishmen are not to dare to have any genuine feelings of their own; that they must not rejoice but by rule; that they must not think but by order;—that no man shall dare to exercise his faculties in contemplating the objects that surround him, nor give way to the indulgence of his joy or grief in the emotions that they excite, but according to the instructions that he shall receive. That, in observing the events that happen to surrounding and neutral nations, he shall not dare to think whether they are favourable to the principles that contribute to the happiness of man, or the contrary; and that he must take, not merely his opinions, but his sensations from His Majesty's Ministers and their satellites for the time being! Sir, whenever the time shall come that the character and spirits of Englishmen are so subdued—when they shall consent to believe that every thing which happens around is indifferent both to their understandings and their hearts; and when they shall be brought to rejoice and grieve, just as it shall suit the taste, the caprice, or the ends of Ministers, then I pronounce the constitution of this country to be extinct. We have read of religious persecutions—of the implacable oppressions of the Roman See, of the horrors of the inquisition of Spain; but so obdurate, so hard, so intolerable a scheme of cruelty, was never engendered in the mind, much less practised by any tyrant, spiritual or temporal. For see to what lengths they carry this system of intellectual oppression. Under various pretexts there have been tumults and disorders, but the true design was to overturn the constitution—So says the speech—and mark the illustration of the right honourable Magistrate. “ There have been various “ societies established in the city of London, instituted for the “ plausible purpose of merely discussing constitutional ques-

“ tions, but which were really designed to propagate seditious doctrines.” So then, by this new scheme of tyranny, we are not to judge of the conduct of men by their overt acts, but are to arrogate to ourselves at once the province and the power of the Deity; we are to arraign a man for his secret thoughts, and to punish him, because we chuse to believe him guilty! “ You tell me indeed,” says one of these municipal inquisitors, “ that you meet for an honest purpose, but I know better—Your plausible pretext shall not impose upon me—I know your seditious design. I will brand you for a traitor by my own proper authority.” What innocence can be safe against such a power? What inquisitor of Spain, of ancient or of modern tyranny, can hold so lofty a tone? Well and nobly, seasonably and truly, has the noble Earl (Wycombe) said; and I would not weaken the sentiment by repeating the expression in terms less forcible than his own, but that the eternal truth cannot suffer by the feebleness of the terms in which it is conveyed. “ There are speculative people in this country, who disapprove of the system of our Government, and there must be such men as long as the land is free, for it is of the very essence of freedom for men to differ upon speculative points.” Is it possible to conceive, that it should enter into the imaginations of freemen to doubt of this truth? The instant that the general sense of the people shall question this truth, and that opinion shall be held dependant on the will of Ministers and Magistrates, from that moment, I say, I date the extinction of our liberties as a people. Our constitution was not made, thank God, in a day. It is the result of gradual and progressive wisdom. It has grown up in a series, and never, never, has the guardian, protecting genius of England, been either asleep or satisfied.

—— “ O but man, proud man!

“ Drest in a little brief authority,

“ Plays such fantastic tricks before high Heaven,

“ As makes the Angels weep.”

Now it seems the constitution is complete—now we are to stand still. We are to deride the practice and the wisdom of our forefathers; we are to elevate ourselves with the constitution in our hands, and to hold it forth to a wondering world.

as a model of human perfection. Away with all further improvement, for it is impossible ; away with all further melioration of the state of man in society, for it is needless. Let no man touch this work of man, it is like the work of Heaven, perfect in all its parts, and unlike every other work of man, it is neither capable of perversion, nor subject to decay. Such is the presumptuous language that we hear ; and not content with this haughty tone, they imitate the celebrated anathema of brother Peter, in the Tale of a Tub, and exclaim, “G-d confound you all eternally if you offer to believe other-ways.”

Now this, Sir, is the crisis which I think so truly alarming. We are come to the moment, when the question is, whether we shall give to the King, that is, to the Executive Government, complete power over our thoughts. Whether we are to resign the exercise of our natural faculties to the Ministers for the time being, or whether we shall maintain, that in England no man is criminal, but by the commission of overt acts forbidden by the law. This I call a crisis more imminent and tremendous than any that the history of this country ever exhibited, I am not so ignorant of the present state of men's minds, and of the ferment artfully created, as not to know that I am now advancing an opinion likely to be unpopular. It is not the first time that I have incurred the same hazard. But I am as ready to meet the current of popular opinion now running in favour of those high lay doctrines, as in the year 1783 I was to meet the opposite torrent, when it was said, that I wished to sacrifice the people to the Crown. I will do now as I did then---I will act against the cry of the moment in the confidence that the reflection of the people will bear me out. I know well that there are societies who have published opinions, and circulated pamphlets containing doctrines tending, if you please, to subvert our establishments. I say that they have done nothing unlawful in this, for these pamphlets have not been suppressed by law. Shew me the law that orders these books to be burnt, and I will acknowledge the illegality of their proceeding ; but if there be no such law, you violate the law in acting without authority. You have taken upon you to do that for which you have no warrant, and you vote they are guilty. What is the course prescribed by law ? If

any doctrines are published tending to subvert the Constitution in Church and State, you may take cognizance of the fact in a Court of Law. What have you done? Taken upon you by your own authority to suppress them! to erect every man, not merely into an inquisitor, but into a Judge, into a spy, into an informer—to set father against father—brother against brother, and neighbour against neighbour, and in this way you expect to maintain the peace and tranquillity of the country! You have gone upon the principles of slavery in all your proceedings; you neglect in your conduct the foundation of all legitimate Government, the Rights of the People, the Rights of Man. And setting up this bugbear, you spread a panic for the very purpose of sanctifying this infringement, while again the very infringement begets and engenders the evil which you dread. One extreme naturally leads to another. Those who dread republicanism, fly for shelter to the Crown. Those who desire reform, and are calumniated, are driven by despair to republicanism. And this is the evil that I dread.

These are the extremes into which these violent agitations hurry the people to the gradual decrease of that middle order of men who dread as much republicanism on the one hand, as they do despotism on the other. That middle order of men, who have hitherto preserved to this country all that is dear in life, I am sorry to say it, is daily lessening; but permit me to say, that while my feeble voice continues, it shall not be totally extinct; there shall at least be one man who will, in this ferment of extremes, preserve the centre point. I may be abused by one side, I may be libelled by the other; I may be branded at one and the same time with the terms of firebrand and lukewarm politician; but though I love popularity, and own that there is no external reward so dear to me as the good opinion and confidence of my fellow citizens, yet no temptation of such complacency shall ever induce me to join any association that has for its object a change in the basis of our constitution, or an extension of any of those bases beyond the just proportion. I will stand in the gap, and oppose myself to all the wild projects of a new-fangled theory, as much as against the monstrous iniquity of exploded doctrines. I think the latter is more our present danger than the former. I see not merely in the panic of the timorous, but in the acts of the designing, cause for

alarm against the most abhorrent doctrines. The new Associations have acted with little disguise. One of them I must applaud for the sincerity of its practice. Mr. Chairman Reeves\* says, that they will not only *prosecute*, but they will *convince*

\* The following are the Resolutions of the New Association, whose proceedings are alluded to by Mr. Fox, and of which the gentleman here mentioned is Chairman.

Association for preserving Liberty and Property against Republicans and Levellers.

At a Meeting of Gentlemen at the Crown and Anchor Tavern, November 20, 1792, John Reeves, Esq. in the chair, the following Considerations and Resolutions were entered into and agreed upon :

Considering the danger to which the public peace and order are exposed by the circulating of mischievous opinions, founded upon plausible but false reasoning ; and that this circulation is principally carried on by the industry of clubs and societies of various denominations in many parts of the kingdom :

It appears to us, that it is now become the duty of all persons, who wish well to their native country, to endeavour, in their several neighbourhoods, to prevent the sad effects of such mischievous industry ; and that it would greatly tend to promote these good endeavours, if societies were formed in different parts of the kingdom, whose object should be to support the laws, to suppress seditious publications, and to defend our persons and property against the innovations and depredations that seem to be threatened by those who maintain the mischievous opinions before alluded to.

These opinions are conveyed in the terms—*the Rights of Man—Liberty and Equality—No King—No Parliament*—and others of the like import ; all of them, in the sense imposed on them, expressing sentiments in direct opposition to the laws of this land, and some of them such as are inconsistent with the well-being of society under any laws whatsoever.

It appears to us, the tendency of these opinions is, that we are voluntarily to surrender every thing we now possess ; our religion and our laws ; our civil government and civil society ; and that we are to trust to the formation of something new, upon the principles of equality, and under the auspices of speculative men, who have conceived ideas of perfection that never yet were known in the world : and it appears, that the missionaries of this sect are aiming at effecting the overthrow of the present system of government and society, by infusing into the minds of ignorant men causes of discontent adapted to their various stations ; some of which causes are wholly imaginary, and the rest are such as inseparably belong to civil life ; have existed, and ever will exist, under all forms of government ; cannot be removed by any change, and will be aggravated and multiplied, a hundred fold, by the change proposed.

It appears from history and observation, that the inequality of rank and fortune in this happy country, is more the result of every

men, and they recommend, among other publications, a hand-bill, entitled, "A Pennyworth of Truth," in which, among other odd things, it is said, "Have you not read the bible?—  
 "Do you not know that it is there written, that the king is

man's own exertions, than of any controlling institution of the State. Men become great, who have greatly distinguished themselves by the application of talents natural or acquired. Men become rich, who have persevered with industry in the application to trade and commerce, to manufactures, and other useful employments. How many persons now of great rank and fortune, who were born without either! How many rich merchants and traders who begun their career in the lowest employments of the shop and counting-house!

In the progress to this advancement they have all, in their stations, contributed their share toward the show of opulence, both public and private, which is to be seen in every part of this island. It is by the effects of this industry, that the gentleman is enabled to support his rank and station; and the merchant and tradesman to employ his clerks, journeymen, and apprentices. Hence comes the price of the farmer's corn, and the wages of servants of every description. By this happy *Inequality*, and dependence of one man on another, employment is found for all, in their several vocations to which they have been called by design or accident. This inequality and dependence is so infinitely diversified in this country, that there is no place upon earth where there are so many ways, in which a man by his talents and industry may raise himself above his equals. This has hitherto been thought a pre-eminent happiness that was peculiar to ourselves, and ought to be cherished: it has been ascribed to the protecting influence which property has always enjoyed under equal laws; and it has increased of late years in a wonderful degree, by the prosperity which was caused, and can only be continued by the same influence.

We are, upon the fullest deliberation, of opinion, that proposing to pull down this goodly fabric, which has been gradually reared by the successive virtue and industry of all the great and good men who have lived in this island for centuries, and to submit to begin afresh upon a new system of Equality, as it is called, seems a proposition that can be suggested only by the most undisguised wickedness, and entertained by the grossest folly.

Because, if so wild a plan was to be carried into execution, and all men were made equal, they would from that moment begin to struggle, who should first rise above his equals; and it is beyond all question, if there was any industry, or any virtue; if there was peace, and public prosperity; if there was private happiness and public, in such new-formed society, there would gradually arise an inequality of rank and fortune.

We foresee, from recent experiment in a neighbouring country, that in the operation of bringing to pass such a transition, the lives and properties of all persons in this island would be exposed to the arbitrary disposal of self-opinionated philosophers, and a wild and needy mob, deluded and instigated by them; that with the introduction of equality in rank and fortune, an expectation would be



“ the Lord’s anointed ? But did you ever hear of his having  
 “ anointed a republic ?” Such is the manner in which these  
 associations are to convince the minds of men ! In the course  
 of the present century, their recommendation would have been

raised in the lower orders, which must first be gratified with plunder, and afterwards would sink into a state of disappointment and abject poverty. When all were equalized, there would no longer be a superfluity to pay the hire of servants, or purchase the productions of art or manufacture ; no commerce, no credit ; no resource for the active, but in robbery, and in all those public disorders which make life miserable. Thus would the present generation be certainly ruined ; that which is to follow could not propose to itself a remedy, but in pursuing the same arts of peace which had been so capriciously abandoned ; and the more they prospered in that pursuit, the more they would contribute to reproduce the inequality which had been before condemned and exploded.—Where then are the blessings of this reform, and to what purpose is misery to be brought on the present generation ?

It is with grief we see that in a neighbouring country the carrying into practice of this wild doctrine of *equality* and *the Rights of Man*, has already produced these evils, and others ten thousand times greater. It is not yet publicly known, nor can it enter into the gentle heart of a Briton to conceive, the number of atrocious crimes against God and man, that have been committed in support of these opinions. Murders and assassinations have been deliberately planned, and justified by some of these pretended philosophers, as the means to attain their ends of reform. With all their pretences and promises, they have proceeded to violate every right, civil and natural, that should have been observed towards their equals ;—the people, who have only changed their masters, groan under new tyrannies of which they never heard or dreamed ; and are subjected to the chastisement of one desperate leader after another. The excesses of these ruffian demagogues have no bounds ; they have already surpassed the wildest phrenzies of fanaticism, superstition, and enthusiasm ; plundering and murdering at home, and propagating their opinions by the sword in foreign countries :—imposture, fallacy, falsehood, and bloodshed ; their philosophy is the idle talk of school-boys, and their actions are the savage ferociousness of wild beasts.

Such are the *new lights* and the *false philosophy* of our pretended reformers ; and such the effects they have produced, where, alone, they have unfortunately been tried. But, however these poor pretences may have imposed on the understandings of men, in a neighbouring country, bred in ignorance, oppression, and poverty, they can have no influence on the good sense and gravity of Britons, who have been used to the enjoyment of true liberty, and every day feel the blessings of abundance derived from a productive industry, protected by equal laws, and a free Government. It is well known, that those who are virtuous and honest have many more means of acquiring ease and comfort, wealth and distinction, and in a superior degree, in this country than in any other ; it is well known, that we already possess, and have long possessed, really and truly that which

prosecuted as high treason. In the years 1715 and 1745, to have dared to say that Kings derived their power from Divine right, would have been prosecuted as treason; and I ask you, if, even now, this is the way to inculcate the principles of ge-

the pretended reformers would persuade ignorant people they alone can bestow. It has been the pride of Britons to boast of their liberty and property; and although these visionary reformers have chosen to substitute the notion of equality in the place of the latter, it is trusted there are enough who know too well the value of their property, acquired under the influence of true liberty, to surrender it in exchange for an empty name. It is well known, and we feel it daily, that we have as much of these pretended new inventions, as is necessary and convenient for a well-ordered society. Every one has all the rights of man that leave him at liberty to do good to himself and his neighbour, and (what is worth considering) to protect his person and property against open or secret plunderers. He has as much of equality as one man can possess without diminishing the equality of his neighbour. We are told by our religion, (for we have a religion) that we are to do unto all men as we would that men should do unto us; and this is realized to us by the firm administration of the law, which suffers no injury to go without a remedy, and affords a remedy equally to the proudest and the poorest.

Such are *the rights of man*; such *the liberty and equality* which we have long enjoyed; under these we have lived and prospered, both in public and private, beyond the example of any country; and to maintain them, as they are, unimpaired by the fancies of pedant-politicians, or the rude hands of ruffian levellers, every true Briton ought to shed his blood.

Impressed with these sentiments in favour of our happy establishment, and alarmed by the mischievous endeavours, that are now using by wicked men, to mislead the uninformed, and to spirit up the discontented by furnishing them with plausible topics, tending to the subversion of the state, and incompatible with all government whatsoever:

We do, as private men, unconnected with any party or description of persons at home, taking no concern in the struggles at this moment making abroad, but most seriously anxious to preserve the true liberty, and unexampled prosperity we happily enjoy in this kingdom, think it expedient and necessary to form ourselves into an association for the purpose of discouraging, in every way that lies in our power, the progress of such nefarious designs as are meditated by the wicked and senseless reformers of the present time; and we do hereby resolve, and declare as follows:

First—That the persons present at this meeting do become a society for discouraging and suppressing seditious publications, tending to disturb the peace of this kingdom, and for supporting a due execution of the laws made for the protection of persons and property.

Secondly—That this society do use its best endeavours occasionally to explain those topics of public discussion which have been perverted by evil designing men, and to shew, by irrefragable proc-

nuine loyalty? No, Sir! thank God, the people of this country have a better ground of loyalty to the House of Brunswick than Divine right, namely, that they are the sovereigns of their own election; that their right is not derived from superstition, but from the choice of the people themselves; that it originated in the only genuine fountain of all Royal power, the will of the many; and that it has been strengthened and confirmed by the experience of the blessings they have enjoyed, because the House of Brunswick has remembered the principles upon which they received the crown. It is rather extraordinary, Sir, that they should hold such a language at this precise moment—that they should think it right to abuse Republics, at the very moment that we are called upon to protect the Republic of Holland; to spread the doctrine that Kings only have Divine right, may indispose your allies to receive your proposed succour. They may not choose to receive into their country your Admirals and Generals, who being appointed by this King, in divine right, must partake of the same anger, and be sworn enemies to all forms of government not so sanctified. Surely, independant of the falsehood and the danger at home of such doctrines, it is the height of impolicy at this time to hold them in regard even to our neighbours. It may be asked, would I prosecute such papers? To this I answer very candidly, I would not. I never yet saw the seditious paper that I would have thought it necessary to prosecute; but that by no means implies but that emergencies might make it proper;

that they are not applicable to the state of this country, that they can produce no good, and certainly must produce great evil.

Thirdly—That this society will receive with great thanks all communications that shall be made to it for the above purposes.

Fourthly—That it be recommended to all those, who are friends to the established law, and to peaceable society, to form themselves, in their different neighbourhoods, into similar societies for promoting the same laudable purposes.

Fifthly—That this society do meet at this place or elsewhere, every Tuesday, Thursday, and Saturday.

Sixthly—That these considerations and resolutions be printed in all the public papers, and otherwise circulated into all parts of the kingdom.

By order of the society,

J. MOORE, Secretary.

N. B. All letters and communications are requested to be addressed to the Secretary at this place.

but surely there is nothing so essential to the true check of sedition, as impartiality in prosecution. If a Government wishes to be respected, they must act with the most rigorous impartiality, and must shew that they are as determined to prevent the propagations of doctrines injurious to the rights of the People, as they are those hostile to the rights of the Crown. If men are to be encouraged to rally round the one standard, you must not, you ought not to prevent volunteers from rallying round the other, unless you desire to stifle in the breasts of men the surest and most active principle of obedience, belief in your impartiality.

When I first heard that the militia were called out \*, I felt more anxiety and consternation than ever possessed my mind. I

\* The following are the proclamations for calling out the Militia, and assembling the Parliament :

#### BY THE KING.—A PROCLAMATION.

GEORGE R.

WHEREAS by an act, passed in the twenty-sixth year of Our reign, entitled, “ An act for amending and reducing into one act “ of Parliament the laws relating to the Militia in that part of Great “ Britain called England,” it is enacted, That it shall be lawful for Us, in the cases and in manner therein mentioned, the occasion being first declared in Council, and notified by proclamation, if no Parliament shall be then sitting, to order and direct the drawing out and embodying of Our militia forces, or any part thereof. And whereas We have received information, that in breach of the laws, and notwithstanding Our Royal proclamation of the twenty-first day of May last, the utmost industry is still employed by evil disposed persons within this kingdom, acting in concert with persons in foreign parts, with a view to subvert the laws and established constitution of this realm, and to destroy all order and government therein ; and that a spirit of tumult and disorder, thereby excited, has lately shewn itself in acts of riot and insurrection. And whereas, under the present circumstances, it is more particularly necessary, that for the immediate suppression of such attempts, some addition should be made, as the exigency of the case may require, to the force which may be in readiness to act for the support of the civil magistrate ; We therefore, being determined to exert the powers vested in Us by law for the protection of the persons, liberties, and properties of Our faithful subjects, and fully relying on their zeal and attachment to Our person and government, and to the happy constitution established in these kingdoms, have thought fit to declare in Our Council, Our Royal intention, for the causes and on the occasion aforesaid, to draw out and embody such part of Our militia forces as may more immediately enable Us to provide for the said important objects.— And We do hereby, in pursuance of the said recited act, notify to all

thought that certainly they had heard of some actual insurrection, or impending invasion. But when I heard that they were

Our loving subjects Our said intention, and the causes and occasion thereof.

Given at Our Court at Windsor, the first day of December, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-two, and in the thirty-third year of Our reign.

God Save the King.

[The regiments of militia ordered to be embodied were, Cumberland, Durham, Essex, Kent, Lincoln, Norfolk, Northumberland, Suffolk, Westmoreland, North and East Ridings of York; to which were added, a few days after, those of Berks, Bucks, Cornwall, Devon, Dorset, Herts, Surry, Hants, Suffex.]

### BY THE KING.—A PROCLAMATION.

GEORGE R.

WHEREAS by an act passed in the twenty-sixth year of Our reign, entitled, "An act for amending and reducing into one act of Parliament the laws relating to the Militia in that part of Great Britain called England," it is enacted, that whenever We shall cause the militia to be drawn out and embodied, on the occasions and in the manner therein mentioned, if the Parliament shall then be separated by such adjournment or prorogation as will not expire within fourteen days; We may and shall issue Our proclamation for the meeting of the Parliament within fourteen days; and the Parliament shall accordingly meet and sit upon such day as shall be appointed by such proclamation, and continue to sit and act in like manner, to all intents and purposes, as if it had stood adjourned or prorogued to the same day: And whereas we have thought fit, in pursuance of the said act, this day to declare in Our Council, certain causes and occasions moving Us to order and direct, that such part of Our militia forces, as may more immediately enable Us to provide for the important objects therein mentioned, should be drawn out and embodied: And whereas, in pursuance of the said recited act, We have thought fit on this day to issue Our Royal proclamation, notifying the causes and occasions so declared in Council as aforesaid: And whereas Our Parliament now stands prorogued to Thursday the third day of January next; We therefore, by the advice of our Privy Council, do hereby publish and declare Our Royal will and pleasure, that Our said Parliament shall, on Thursday the thirteenth day of this instant December, be held for the dispatch of divers weighty and important affairs. And the Lords Spiritual and Temporal, and the Knights, Citizens, and Burghesses, and the Commissioners for Shires and Burghs of the House of Commons, are hereby required to give attendance at Westminster on the said thirteenth day of December.

Given at Our Court at Windsor, the first day of December, one thousand seven hundred and ninety-two, and in the thirty-third year of Our reign.

God Save the King.

not called out to enable Ministers to send the troops to any distant part, to Ireland, or to Scotland, (where they might know of disturbances, though I did not) but that troops were assembling round London, I firmly believed the whole to be a fraud; for I have friends in and about London, as intelligent, as vigilant, as much interested in the tranquillity of the metropolis, as the right honourable Magistrate; and I was confident that an insurrection could not actually exist in London without being known. I pronounced it in my own mind to be a fraud, and I pronounce it here to be so. I am not given to make light assertions in this House, nor do I desire to receive implicit belief. I deprecate confidence on my bare assertion. On the contrary, I state, that I believe this pretext to be a fraud, and I intreat you to inquire, that you may ascertain the truth. I know that there are societies who have indulged themselves, as I think, in silly and frantic speculations, and who have published toasts, &c. that are objectionable; but that there is any insurrection, or that any attempt was making to overthrow the constitution, I deny. Now if this assertion of Ministers is a falsehood, is it an innocent falsehood? Are the people of this country playthings in the hands of Ministers, that they may frighten them and disturb them at pleasure? Are they to treat them as some weak, jealous-pated, and capricious men treat their wives and mistresses—alarm them with false stories, that they may cruelly feast on the torture of their apprehensions, and delight in the susceptibility that drowns them in tears! Have they no better enjoyment than to put forth false alarms, that they know may draw from the people the soothing expressions of agitated loyalty? Or do they think that these expressions, generously, readily made, in favour of the King, whom the people rationally love, may extend in its influence to all the persons that are near his throne? Indulging in this passion, they may keep us incessantly in the tumult of apprehension, until at last they so habituate the mind to dread the evil in this quarter, as to look for it in no other, or to stun it by repeated shocks of fiction into an insensibility of real attack.

His Majesty, in the next passage of his speech, brings us to the apprehension of a war. I shall refrain at this time from saying all that occurs to me on this subject, because I wish to

keep precisely to the immediate subject : but never surely had this country so much reason to wish for peace ; never was a period so little favourable to a rupture with France, or with any power. I am not ready to subscribe exactly to the idea of the noble Lord, of the propriety of a resolution never to go to war, unless we are attacked ; but I wish that a motion was proposed by some person, to express our disapprobation of entering upon any war, if we can by any honourable means avoid it. Let no man be deterred by the dread of being in a minority. A minority saved this country from a war against Russia. And surely it is our duty, as it is true policy to exert every means to avert that greatest of national calamities. In 1789 we all must remember that Spain provoked this country by an insult, which is a real aggression ; we were all agreed on the necessity of the case, but did we go headlong to war ? No, we determined with becoming fortitude on an armed negotiation. We did negotiate and we avoided a war. But now we disdain to negotiate. Why ? Because we have no Minister at Paris. Why have we no Minister there ? Because France is a Republic ! And so we are to pay in the blood and treasure of the people for a punctilio ! If there are discontents in the kingdom, Sir, this is the way to inflame them. It is of no consequence to any people what is the form of the government with which they may have to treat. It is with the Governors, whatever may be the form, that in common sense and policy they can have to do, and if they should change their form and change their Governors, their course would remain the same. Having no legitimate concern with the internal state of any independent people, the road of common sense is simple and direct. That of pride and punctilio, is as tangled, as it is serpentine. Is the pretext the opening of the Scheld ? I cannot believe that such an object can be the real cause. I doubt, even if a war on this pretext would be undertaken with the approbation of the Dutch. What was the conduct of the French themselves under their depraved old system, when the good of the people never entered into the contemplation of the Cabinet ? The Emperor threatened to open the Scheld in 1786. Did the French go to war with him instantly to prevent it ? No. They opened a negotiation, and prevented it by interfering with their good offices. Why have we not so interfered ?

Because, forsooth, France is an unanointed Republic! Oh miserable, infatuated Frenchmen! Oh lame and inconsiderate politicians! Why, instead of breaking the holy vial of Rheims, why did you not pour some of the sacred oil on the heads of your Executive Council, that the pride of states might not be forced to plunge themselves and you into the horrors of war, rather than be contaminated by your acquaintance! How short-sighted were you to believe, that the prejudices of infants had departed with the gloom of ignorance, and that states were grown up to a state of manhood and reason!

This naturally brings us back again to the business of this day, namely, whether any address should be agreed to or not. I desire then to put it seriously to the conscience and honour of gentlemen to say, if they are not aiding the object of republicans and levellers, if they shall agree to plunge this country headlong into a war, or shall agree to do any business, or to give any pledge whatever to the Crown, until they inquire and ascertain whether there is an insurrection in this country or not? Shall we declare war without inquiring whether we are also to have commotions at home? Shall we pledge our constituents to submission, to compliance, without first proving to them that the strong measure of Government has been authorised by truth? If you would have the laws respected by the people, I say again, you must begin by showing that they are respected from above. If you do not prove to the people that there is an actual insurrection (for I leave out impending invasion and rebellion, as these are not even pretended) you cannot withhold from them the knowledge that you have acted illegally, and how can you expect rational obedience to the laws when you yourselves counteract them? When you set up the *ratio suavioria* as the *ratio justificata*, the people will clearly discern the futility and falsehood of your logic, and translate at once your terms into their true English of real causes and false pretexts. *Ut ameris amabilis esto*, is as true in Government and Legislation, as it is in manners and private life, and is as well established by experience. The people will not be cheated. They will look round, and demand where this danger is to be seen. Is it in England—They see it overflowing in expressions of loyalty, and yet they libel it with imputations of insurrection. In Ireland, you know there is danger, and



dare not own it. There you have prorogued the Parliament to the 17th instant, but not to meet till the end of January for the dispatch of business, though you know that there a most respectable and formidable convention—( I call it formidable, because I know nothing so formidable as reason, truth, and justice) will oblige you, by the most cogent reasons, to give way to demands, which the magnanimity of the nation ought to have anticipated. There you have thus prorogued the Parliament, and deprived yourselves of the means of doing that gracefully which you must do, and which you ought to have done long ago to subjects, as attached to their King, as abundantly endowed with every manly virtue as any part of the united kingdom. And while the claims of generous, and ill-treated millions are thus protracted, and in addition to the hardship of their condition, they are insulted with the imprudent assertion of the tyrannical ascendancy, there is a miserable mockery held out of alarms in England which have no existence, but which are made the pretext of assembling the Parliament in an extraordinary way, in order in reality to engage you in a foreign contest. What must be the fatal consequence when a well-judging people shall decide, what I sincerely believe—that the whole of this business is a ministerial manoeuvre? Will they own the real truth, and say that they wanted a pretext to assemble Parliament to make up for their want of vigilance? They must take their choice, and submit to incur the indignation of their country, or feel themselves in a state of contempt. There are men who in this very act give them the praise of vigilance. They did all this, to be sure, with a little harmless fraud, to prevent evils. Let us examine their claim to vigilance.

This vigilant Ministry saw, nay, if we may take their character from their associates, hoped that France was on the brink of falling a sacrifice to the united force of Austria and Prussia, the two powers of all others, whose union would be the most dreadful thing to England; but they saw no danger in this conquest to England, though thereby these great military powers were to become maritime. They saw no danger in the union concerted between them, nay, when they had given away Poland in the mean time, because I suppose they thought that when Oczakow was gone, the balance of Europe went

with it, and they retreated out of the field with disgrace.— They gave away Poland with as little compunction as honour, and with the unenviable certainty, that their blustering was laughed at, and despised in every Court in Europe. I know that some of them have inordinate self-complacency, yet I will not be so uncandid as to conceal my honest opinion, that there is not among them a single man, whose talents for great and commanding policy have either attracted or secured the confidence of any quarter of Europe. Do they boast of their vigilance? The dextrous surrender of Oczakow, as they now know, might have saved the fall and ruin of Poland. Do they boast of their vigilance? And had they no apprehension of the union between Austria and Prussia? Had they such total reliance on the moderation of Prussia, on his intimate friendship with, his gratitude to, his confidence in our faithful Cabinet! Do they boast of their vigilance, and yet saw nothing of their present dread for Holland and Brabant, on the 30th of September, when to the joy of every man, whose heart is warmed with the love of freedom, the Duke of Brunswick retreated before the armies of France? Were they vigilant, not to foresee the consequences of that retreat, or did they flatter themselves with the weak, the false hope that still the steadiness of men bred up in the trammels of tactics and discipline, would be an overmatch for the impetuosity of men, animated by the glorious flame of liberty? If so, the battle of Jemappe ought, I should think, to have shewn vigilant men their error. That happened on the 6th of November. On the same day the Government of the Netherlands took to flight, and the news arrived in England on the 10th or 12th. What did these vigilant Ministers? On the 17th they prorogued the Parliament to the 3d of January, without even saying that it was then to meet for the dispatch of business! And yet on these vigilant men we are to repose, though in the eyes of Europe, in the hearts of Englishmen, an armament in their hands is a proof and earnest of their future humiliation!

They call for subsidiary aid from the loyalty of the People, and to procure this they have recourse to history, and look out for the lucky frauds of former times: they find one of the most lucky frauds was the Popish Plot in the reign of Charles the Second. The same cry in the present moment they knew was

impossible ; but a similar one was feasible in the enmity against a republic. The Protestant Dissenters then, as now, were made the objects of terror, and every art was used to provoke the rage of ignorance and barbarity. The fraud was too successful. Many of my friends, from the best motives, were deluded into the snare, and that most calamitous of all measures, the Proclamation, unfortunately for England, met with their countenance. I cannot better describe this calamity than by reading a passage from an eminent historian (Ralph) on the fatal consequences of the delusion of the Popish Plot. By comparing my friends on the present occasion to the celebrated Lord Russell at that time, I think that I cannot pay a better compliment to them, or at the same time a more just and deserved tribute to the memory of that excellent person. Both, in consequence of their high integrity and attachment to the country, have become the dupes of deception. The passage is as follows :

“ But there were persons, it seems, ready to adopt his  
“ (Oates’s) intelligence, imperfect, chimerical, or fictitious  
“ as it was, and to make use of it as a firebrand to light up  
“ such a flame of dissention as had like to have laid waste the  
“ kingdom ; and of these, according to the distinction already  
“ ready made, some were weak and some were wicked. The  
“ weak were those who thought Popery the greatest mischief  
“ that comprehended all others, who mistook prejudice for  
“ conviction, credulity for candour, and rigour for righteousness.  
“ These, however, meant well, though they acted ill ;  
“ and while doing the drudgery of a party, persuaded themselves  
“ they were saving the nation. The wicked were the  
“ master politicians of the times, who considered Kings not  
“ as they were, good or ill in themselves, but as they were  
“ ill or good with respect to their own immediate views :  
“ now the plot, whether true or false, was formed of the happiest  
“ ingredients imaginable to advance their interest.”

Now, Sir, let me address one word to my valued friends : let them reflect on the consequences of their recent delusion, not dissimilar to the above. The measure of the Proclamation is now stated to be over—it has failed : let them avoid all farther snares of the same kind. They will reflect on the necessity of union from the experience of the advantages which have flowed from it. They cannot feel more sensibly than I

do the benefits of the cordial co-operation of that body of men who have, through the whole of the present reign, had to struggle with prejudice as well as enmity. Let them recollect the manner in which the present Ministers came into power; let them recollect the insidious attempts that have been made to disjoin them; and now that the fatal measure of the Proclamation is over, let them avoid, I say, all farther snares of the same kind. These declarations, which it is now the fashion to sign, I certainly cannot in general approve. Of all that I have seen, that of the Merchants must best conciliate the approbation of constitutional men\*; but I see and

\* *Merchant Taylors' Hall, Dec. 5, 1792.*

At a very numerous Meeting of Merchants, Bankers, and Traders, held here this day, in consequence of public advertisement, Samuel Bosanquet, Esq. in the chair.

The Chairman having read the advertisement by which the Meeting was called,

Resolved, That it is expedient at this time for the Merchants, Bankers, Traders, and other inhabitants of London, to make a public declaration of their firm attachment to the Constitution, and of their resolution to support the same. Then the following declaration was read, viz.

*Declaration in Support of the Constitution of Great Britain.*

We, the Merchants, Bankers, Traders, and other inhabitants of London, whose names are hereunto subscribed, perceiving, with the deepest concern, that attempts are made to circulate opinions contrary to the dearest interests of Britons, and subversive of those principles which have produced and preserved our most invaluable privileges, feel it a duty we owe to our country, ourselves, and our posterity, to invite all our fellow subjects to join with us in the expression of a sincere and firm attachment to the Constitution of these kingdoms, formed in remote, and improved in succeeding, ages, and under which the glorious Revolution in 1688 was effected — a Constitution wisely framed for the diffusion of happiness and true liberty, and which possesses the distinguished merit, that it has on former occasions been, and, we trust, will in future be, found competent to correct its errors, and reform its abuses. Our experience of the improvements in agriculture and manufactures, of the flourishing state of navigation and commerce, and of increased population, still farther impels us to make this public declaration of our determined resolution to support, by every means in our power, the ancient and most excellent Constitution of Great Britain, and a Government by King, Lords, and Commons; and to exert our best endeavours to impress, in the minds of those connected with us, a reverence for, and a due submission to, the laws of their country,

hear on every side such violent doctrines, and such afflicting measures, as no man who is actuated by the wish of preserving peace in this country can subscribe to. A noble Lord, for whom I have a high respect, says he will move for a suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act. I hope not. I have a high respect for the noble Lord (Lord Fielding); but no motive of personal respect shall make me inattentive to my duty. Come from whom it may, I shall, with my most determined powers, oppose so dreadful a measure.

What, it may be asked, would I propose to do in hours of agitation like the present? I will answer openly. If there is a tendency in the Dissenters to discontent, because they conceive themselves unjustly suspected and cruelly calumniated, what should I do? I would instantly repeal the Test and Corporation Acts, and take from them thereby all cause of com-

which have hitherto preserved the liberty, protected the property, and increased the enjoyments of a free and prosperous people.

And the same having been read a second time,

Resolved unanimously, That this Declaration be approved, and be subscribed by all such Merchants, Bankers, Traders, and other inhabitants of London, as may approve thereof, and that it do lie at this Hall until Saturday next inclusive for signature.

Resolved unanimously, That Samuel Bosanquet, Thomas Boddington, Abraham Bracebridge, John Brickwood, Joseph Cotton, Edward Forster, George Griffin, Thomas Hankey, John Harman, Robert Hunter, James Langston, William Manning, Samuel Smith, Theophilus Pritzler, Richard Muilman, Trench Chiswell, John Mellish, Richard Neave, Edward Payne, Benjamin Winthrop, John Read, Thomas Parry, Daniel Giles, Thomas Raikes, John Cottin, Esquires, be a Committee to attend the signing of this Declaration; and they are hereby requested to cause the same to be published in the newspapers, and in any other manner they may think most advisable.

Resolved unanimously, That the thanks of this Meeting be given to the Committee of the Court of Assistants of the Merchant Taylors' Company for the very polite and friendly manner in which the Committee afforded the use of the Hall for the Meeting this day; and that the Chairman be requested to transmit a copy of this resolution.

A motion being made and seconded,

That the thanks of this Meeting be given to Samuel Bosanquet, Esq. for his upright and impartial conduct,

The Chairman left the chair, when the said motion was unanimously agreed to.

Then the Chairman having resumed the chair, the Meeting was adjourned unanimously.

SAMUEL BOSANQUET, Chairman.

plaint. If there were any persons tinctured with a republican spirit, because they thought that the representative government was more perfect in a republic, I would endeavour to amend the representation of the Commons, and to prove that the House of Commons, though not chosen by all, should have no other interest than to prove itself the representative of all. If there were men dissatisfied in Scotland or Ireland, or elsewhere, on account of disabilities and exemptions, of unjust prejudices, and of cruel restrictions, I would repeal the penal statutes, which are a disgrace to our law book. If there were other complaints of grievances, I would redress them where they were really proved; but, above all, I would constantly, cheerfully, patiently listen — I would make it known, that if any man felt, or thought he felt, a grievance, he might come freely to the bar of this House and bring his proofs. And it should be made manifest to all the world, that where they did exist, they should be redressed; where they did not, that it should be made manifest. If I were to issue a proclamation, this should be my proclamation — “ If any man has a grievance, let him bring it to the bar of the Commons’ House of Parliament with the firm persuasion of having it honestly investigated.” These are the subsidies that I would grant to Government. What, instead of this, is done? Suppress the complaint—check the circulation of knowledge—command that no man shall read; or, that as no man under 100*l.* a year can kill a partridge, that no man under 20*l.* or 30*l.* shall dare to read or think!

I see in Westminster the most extraordinary resolutions of parochial meetings. In the City, with which I am intimately connected, and to which I have high obligations, there have been resolutions and associations which militate against every idea that I was ever taught to entertain both of Law and Constitution. In the parish of St. Anne, Soho, at the head of which parochial meeting I see a much-respected friend of mine, Sir Joseph Banks: they have demanded a register of all the strangers living in the parish. In St. Clement’s, and elsewhere, publicans are threatened with the loss of their licenses if they shall suffer any newspapers to be read in their houses that they shall think seditious. Good God! where did Justices find this law? I have always thought that there was

no one thing of which the law was more justly jealous, than the exercise of the discretionary power given to Justices with regard to licences, and that above all things it was not permitted them to suffer political motives to interfere in the giving or withholding licences. And publicans are to be made judges of libel! No newspaper or pamphlet is to be read, but such as they shall determine to be free from sedition! No conversation is to be suffered but what they shall judge to be loyal! And yet in this very House, not more than a twelvemonth ago, when I brought in a bill with regard to libels, we all heard it asserted that the knowledge of what was a libel could not be safely left to the determination of twelve jurymen—it could be judged of only by sages in the law. How can these publicans be conceived capable of judging, or by what rule are they to act? Are they to take their opinions from these Associations? They recommend to them that loyal paper “Thomas Bull to John Bull,” where, among other things, it is pretty plainly insinuated, that it would have been well if Petion, the late Mayor of Paris, had been assassinated when in England, and that it would be an excess of virtue to exterminate the Dissenters! Are they to be told, that such writings as these are perfectly harmless and praiseworthy, but that discussions on the constitution, debating societies, (although, by the bye, I never knew London without debating societies, and I cannot see by what law any Magistrate can interrupt their peaceable discussions) and all papers and conversations, where there are free opinions on the nature of Government, are libellous? What must be the consequence of all this, but that these publicans must decide that that is libellous which is disapproved of by Ministers for the time being, and by these Associations, and that all freedom of opinion, and all the fair and impartial freedom of the press is utterly destroyed.

I love the constitution as it is established; it has grown up with me as a prejudice and as a habit, as well as from conviction. I know that it is calculated for the happiness of man, and that its constituent branches of King, Lords, and Commons, could not be altered or impaired, without entailing on this country the most dreadful miseries. It is the best adapted to England, because, as the noble Earl truly said, the people of England think it the best; and the safest course is to consult

the judgement, and gratify the predilections of a country. Heartily convinced as I am, however, that to secure the peace, strength, and happiness of the country, we must maintain the constitution against all innovation, yet I do not think so highly and superstitiously of any human institution, as to believe that it is incapable of being perverted; on the contrary, I believe that it requires an increasing vigilance on the part of the people to prevent the decay and dilapidations to which every edifice is subject. I think too that we may be led asleep to our real danger by these perpetual alarms to loyalty, which, in my opinion, are daily sapping the constitution. Under the pretext of guarding it from the assaults of republicans and levellers, we run the hazard of leaving it open on the other and more feeble side. We are led insensibly to the opposite danger, that of increasing the power of the Crown, and of degrading the influence of the Commons House of Parliament. It is in such moments as the present that the most dangerous, because unsuspected, attacks may be made on our dearest rights; and let us only look back to the whole course of the present administration, and we shall see, that from their outset to the present day, it has been their invariable object to degrade the House of Commons in the eyes of the people, and to diminish its power and influence in every possible way.

It was not merely in the outset of their career, when they stood up against the declared voice of the House of Commons, that this spirit was manifested, but uniformly, progressively through their whole ministry, the same disposition has been shewn, until at last it came to its full, undisguised demonstration on the question of the Russian war, when the House of Commons was degraded to the lowest state of insignificance and contempt, in being made to retract its own words, and to acknowledge that it was of no consequence or avail what were its sentiments on any one measure. The Minister has regularly acted upon this sort of principle—"I do not care what the House of Commons may think, or what may be thought of them—it is not their verdict that is to acquit me in any moment of difficulty or any hour of trial. I will agitate the people without—I will see whether they will bear me up in my measures; and as for the House of Commons, if in the height of their confidence in me, they shall be made to say



“ one thing to-day, I will make them, with equal ease, and  
“ without regard to their character, say another to-morrow.”  
Such is the true English of the principle of the right honourable gentleman’s conduct, and this principle he has constantly acted upon, to the vilification of the popular branch of the constitution. What is this, but to make it appear that the House of Commons is in reality what Thomas Paine, and writers like him, say it is, namely, that it is not the true representative and organ of the people. In the same way, and by the same language, might Thomas Paine bring a slander upon our Courts of Law, and upon the trial by jury. In the same tone, he might assert, “ Do not tell me what a jury of twelve men  
“ may say of my book—do not tell me what these associations  
“ say—I reject all tribunals, either constituted by legal authority, or self-erected. Give me the people for my judges,  
“ and I will prove that my doctrines are agreeable to them.” Such language would square completely with that of Ministers, and constantly, uniformly have they resorted to the dangerous innovation of supporting themselves, without regard to the opinion of the House of Commons, by appeals one day to the Crown, the next to the Lords, and the third to the People, uniformly striving to exhibit Parliament in the disgraceful and pitiful light of complete incapacity. Is it not wonderful that all the true constitutional watchfulness of England should be dead to the only true danger that the day exhibits, and that they should be roused only by the idiotic clamour of republican phrenzy and of popular insurrection, which do not exist?

Sir, I have done my duty. I have, with the certainty of opposing myself to the furor of the day, delivered my opinion at more length than I intended, and perhaps I have intruded too long on the indulgence of the House. [A general cry of “ Hear him!” bespoke the perfect attention of the House.] I have endeavoured to persuade you against the indecent haste of committing yourselves to these assertions of an existing insurrection, until you shall make a rigorous inquiry where it is to be found. To avoid involving the people in the calamity of a war, without at least ascertaining the internal state of the kingdom, and to prevent us from falling into the disgrace of being, as heretofore, obliged perhaps in a week to retract every syllable that we are now called upon to say. To carry

this into effect, I propose, that after the first sentence of the proposed motion, " That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, humbly to thank His Majesty for his most gracious speech from the throne," the following words be substituted in the room of all that follow in the original motion : " To express to His Majesty our most zealous attachment to the excellent constitution of this free country ; our sense of the invaluable blessings which we derive from it, and our unshaken determination to maintain and preserve it ; to assure His Majesty that, uniting with all His Majesty's faithful subjects in these sentiments of loyalty to the Throne, and attachment to the ~~Constitution~~, we feel in common with them the ~~deepest~~ anxiety and concern, when we see those measures adopted by the executive Government, which the law authorises only in cases of insurrection within this realm.

" That His Majesty's faithful Commons, assembled in a manner new and alarming to the country, think it their first duty, and will make it their first business, to inform themselves of the causes of this measure, being equally zealous to enforce a due obedience to the laws on the one hand, and a faithful execution of them on the other."

Mr. WINDHAM said, that strange as it might seem, he should vote this night with those whose measures he had uniformly, and conscientiously reprobated in opposition to those whose political sentiments on almost every occasion, were in unison with his own. It might seem strange that he should be found defending the measures of persons with whom he had been so long in political hostility, and in some degree reprobating the principles of some of his political associates. He had his attachments, he confessed, and those attachments in lesser considerations might have some influence even upon his judgment. But upon a subject of the importance of the present, he was determined to be governed solely by a sense of duty.—Indeed he had often given his opinion in that house, that in the year 1784, most unconstitutional measures had been adopted, and unconstitutional principles maintained; and on the same grounds he had often since reprobated the conduct of Ministers, who had pretty uniformly adhered to the system upon which they had come into power; nay, he was of opinion,

that to the proceedings of 1784, we might ascribe the evils of our present situation; but the question now was, whether they were right in the present instance? and here he confessed he could not agree with his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox) in almost any of the sentiments he had expressed to-night.--- They differed either upon principle, or on the application of principle, on all the points of this subject. The foundation however of their difference lay in the state of this country at the present moment. "Was the country at this moment in a state of danger, aye or no?" He was told, he said, that there was no real cause for alarm among the people; that the only alarm that was felt had been created by Government. Government must certainly have had strange and wonderful powers indeed to produce the alarm every day expressed in different parts. No, there were serious and well-founded alarms from the conduct, not of the Officers of Government, but from those who had sworn an enmity to all Government.— Did not the whole country feel it? Was not every town, village, or hamlet filled with apprehension. Could a man enter into his own house, or could he walk in a field, without observing, that it occupied the whole of the attention of all ranks and descriptions of people; this was what his right honourable friend had been pleased to make a matter of argument, but what was really mere matter of observation; a man should not reason on the probability or improbability of these events, but should observe upon the fact, and attend to the relation of others. If a man confined himself in one room of his own house he would know no more of what was going on in the next, than he would know what was going on in another country; but if he chose to be vigilant he might know a good deal more. So in the present case, if a man would not believe any thing but what he saw, nor see any thing but what he liked, it was not very probable that he would discover much of the alarm in question. But if he was at the pains to observe, the alarm was visible enough. Had he observed it? Yes. He had seen the intention of the enemies of the present constitution expressed in various shapes. He had seen it in the confidence of their agents; in the boldness of those who wished the subversion of the constitution. He appealed to the House, whether they did not know and feel that there was a general

alarm all over the country. The next point to be considered, in the order which his right honourable friend had taken, was how far it might be fit to check the cause of this mischief by law, the question of the policy of doing he had determined in the negative. It was true that the measures now pursued over the country, were such as had never been employed before; but it must be observed, in answer to this, that there never had been such an occasion before. Speculative opinions had been published from time to time in this country, and they might have been continued to be published, but the manner of publishing, as well as the works published of late, were entirely new. He believed the society for Constitutional Information began the system; now pursued, it was soon transplanted into another country, in the fertile soil of which it had thriven so well as to overthrow all order, and establish confusion. Having had this glorious effect by transplantation, it was now brought to this country, for the purpose of producing the same effect. The machine was so well constructed, there were such skill, contrivance, and management in the engineers, that unless Parliament were on their guard, and the sensible and honest part of the community, active in counteracting their designs, the whole form of our Government might be easily subverted. He spoke not from distrust merely, or rumour, but he knew, and it was notorious that there had been, and was now, a constant communication between persons in Paris, and persons in London, the object of which was the destruction of our present form of Government. This sort of counter alliance of the Englishman in Paris, and the Frenchman in London, had been regularly formed, and the effect of it was felt already in an alarming degree, for in every town, in every village, nay almost in every house these worthy gentlemen had their agents, who regularly disseminated certain pamphlets; these agents were vigilant and industrious, delivered these pamphlets gratis, a proof there must be somewhere a society to defray the expence, for these agents could not afford to be thus generous to the Public without assistance; they could not pay for them out of their own pockets. No, the whole was a well-arranged methodized plan, for gradually undermining the principles of the British Constitution. This was not all, they proceeded with the solemnity of an oath, which was, that they were to

be ready—Here the confusion arising from the loud cries of “ Prove! prove!” and “ Hear! hear!” interrupted him for a few seconds---when,

Mr. BURKE called to order. He observed, that a gentleman was asserting a fact which he was satisfied could be proved, and a convenient season would soon arise for that purpose, that was, when there should be an inquiry into this business: but there could be no good reason why any gentleman delivering his sentiments should give up the sources of his information in this stage of the business. There might be good reason why they should not now be exposed.

Mr. WINDHAM then proceeded: he had heard long ago of the truth of what he had just been stating from very unquestionable authority—indeed he had been informed of it by an honourable Member of that house, but it was not a fact of any great consequence. The system he had alluded to, had been carried on all over the country, more or less in the northern part of this kingdom; great pains had been taken with the poorer part of the community, to wean their affections from Government—and it was a fact notoriously known, that the whole plan was supported by a purse which he believed was made up in France, this he did not know, but he believed it to be the case. In answer to this, it might be answered that the French were not likely to contribute much money, having little or none to spare upon this or any other such occasion, to which the reply was obvious. Those who are in a state of desperation, have always the most money to squander upon acts of profligacy and dishonour; besides, poor and wretched as they were, yet such sums however large to individuals could not be of any great consequence to a nation. The manner in which this business was conducted, was very artful. On putting these works of sedition into the hands of the labourer, they always told him they were intended for his instruction. They represented their societies as places for the instruction of the lower class. The proper meaning of fair instruction was by education to teach a man a mode of reasoning. But this instruction was nothing more than a general conveyance of particular opinions. Again, they said that their object was the propagating truth, and the improvement of the condition of man; how well these points had been gained we had re-

cent instances. It was an attempt to reverse the order of society altogether. From the pulpit we had been accustomed to hear laid down, as the foundation of all happiness, obedience to the laws. From the Jacobin Club nothing was inculcated but disobedience to the law ; and the doctrine that those who make laws in this country have no competent authority to make laws. These sentiments, if generally received, would very speedily overturn all order and Government. The art with which these sentiments were introduced among the lower classes of society was consummate ; they pretended that they taught nothing but philosophical truths ; but instead of arguing philosophically in their books they made round assertions, and they acted wisely for their purpose by so doing ; for the persons to whom they addressed themselves, were incapable of pursuing a subject logically from premises to a conclusion, nor would this mode of reasoning suit their cause. Not even these assertions were made, until they had prepared the mind to receive them ; they gained the affections first by flattering the passions, and then they proceeded to instruct, as they termed it. Whether the law, even in the freest country in the world, ought to permit every man to preach what doctrines he thought fit, and gain over as many proselytes as he could, was a question that had often been suggested, and which he should determine in the negative ; for these truths, as they were termed, would dwindle into nothing, if the sentiment built upon them could be seen, and the consequences of them anticipated ; but these poor peasants had not the power of deducing consequences, and therefore they listened to assertion.—Nor could he see the harm there was of preventing all endeavours to explain to a poor, illiterate fellow, whose extent of powers was but barely adequate to the task of procuring food for his own subsistence, points which had divided the opinions of the ablest writers. He saw no great loss to society from putting an end to public-house political clubs, and alehouse debates on politics ; in short, he saw no reason why they should not be altogether suppressed. Next came the question, where will you draw the line, whom will you take up, and whom will you suffer to pass by ; or, shall no man give his opinion upon the constitution ? He said, he could not distinguish in this case by any previous principle, which must depend, as all

acts in the law did, upon the discretion of a competent tribunal, a jury. This point he illustrated by several observations upon the various denominations of homicide and libels. But would he call that treason in duodecimo, which was innocent in quarto? that was what he did mean, because much of the guilt in these cases depended upon the *quo animo*; and he who printed seditious sentiments would take care, if he intended mischief, that they should be within the reach of the lowest order. Many of these persons, it seems, had been calumniated by imputing to them motives which they did not avow, and intentions which they denied; this observation, was specious, but not solid, for it was well known they did intend what they did not profess, and this was demonstrable by their actions; some indeed, when questioned, confessed a direct intention of subverting our Government. If they were asked if they were friends to our Government, they answered, yes. But they wanted no King, they wanted no Lords—All they wanted was a perfect representation of the people. Such a constitution would no more be the constitution of England than the constitution of Venice; in short, their view was to destroy all hereditary right, and perhaps afterwards to attempt an equalization of property; for one of their books stated, that a country could not be said to be truly free, where there was so much inequality among its members. Some gentlemen affected to treat these things with contempt, but they ought not, in his mind, to be so regarded. It was true, the high ranks of life were not contaminated by these infamous principles; but if they were to cast their eyes downward, they would see there lurking underneath a sort of subterranean heat, that might burst forth with prodigious violence, if not immediately extinguished.

With regard to the combined armies that marched towards the capital of France, he believed their motives were good, and therefore he wished them success; and so he should, had their motives been ever so bad: that which they opposed, was worse than any consequence that could have resulted from their success. He had been told, indeed, that no country ought to intermeddle with the internal affairs of another; this might be right in a limited sense, but it could not be so to the length insisted upon by some modern politicians; he could conceive

many instances in which it ought to be departed from. Two nations might quarrel—one might be clearly in the right, and the other clearly in the wrong; the continuance of their contest might affect the interest of a third nation. Such a nation had a right to interfere. But did France pursue only her own internal regulation? Did she keep good faith in her decree, “That she abandoned for ever all ideas of foreign conquest?” She professed, indeed, good will to all mankind, but before a Frenchman could be faithful, his nature must be changed.—It was their object to lower this country, and in that they would persist until they should accomplish their wishes, if possible.—What was to be said for them in the war against the King of Sardinia? Still worse was their conduct at Geneva; but, above all, who would applaud their decree, “to give liberty to mankind?” Was it not avowing an intention to disturb every power in Europe? They talked, indeed, of giving to every place where their arms were victorious, a choice of the form of government; but did they wait for the sense of the majority? Not they indeed. When two or three were gathered together, &c. that was enough for them. What were their intentions with respect to this country? Refer to the correspondence of the Jacobin club of Manchester and the Jacobin club of Paris, did any man believe that they would hesitate to bring an army into the heart of this country, if they thought themselves safe in so doing? but they did not so much depend upon themselves as they did upon their bullies in other countries. Thus, from all circumstances, minute in themselves, but of the most serious importance when combined, it would appear that the alarm was not fictitious, but real. Ministers therefore, in point of principle, had acted rightly in calling out the militia. They might be a little irregular in point of form, but as they had observed the spirit of the constitution, they had his cordial support.

Mr. GREY began with stating, that he concurred with his honourable friend in considering the present as a most momentous period. He regretted the necessity he was under of opposing the honourable gentleman who had spoken last, while he supported an administration whose uniform bad conduct was still more aggravated by their present measures. The situation of danger, in which the country was at present placed, arose



not from the combinations of levellers and republicans, who, he believed, were but few in number, and still less formidable, not from any riots which had originated from circumstances purely local; not from any insurrections, the existence of which had been attached to no particular spot; but the danger arose from the measures of Ministers, which had shaken the pillars of the public security, which had threatened our commerce with the most fatal consequences from a war, and which had even been attended with a still more serious evil, by introducing a practice hostile to the principles of the constitution itself. The honourable gentleman who had spoke last, had not made the distinction between alarm and danger. He had mistaken his own apprehensions for the danger of which he was afraid. He was ready to allow that writings of a certain tendency had been circulated in great profusion, in consequence of the very means which had been taken to suppress them; but the seditious effects which these writings were stated to have had upon the minds of the people, he completely denied. He did not believe the minds of the people to be so perverse as to be disaffected to a constitution from which they enjoyed so many blessings. Their natural good sense would prevent them from adopting any doctrines subversive of that constitution. He was not a friend to Paine's doctrines, but he was not to be deterred by a name from acknowledging that he considered the Rights of Man as the foundation of every Government, and those who stood out against these rights as conspirators against the people. The Rights of the People, he concurred with an honourable writer, in regarding as their advantage, and the dearest right of Englishmen was to the possession of their constitution, while it was maintained on its true principles; but if it was abused, the effect must infallibly be to inflame and heat men's minds, and Ministers alone would be responsible for the consequences which might ensue. If the people in this country, if the people in Scotland complain of grievances, let these grievances be removed, and their discontents would cease. Upon this principle he had last session brought forward his proposal for reform. If the people were put in possession of their rights, there would be no longer any fear either of internal or foreign danger. Into the question of a war with France, he should not enter; he should only re-

mark, that a heavy responsibility must fall upon Ministers, if they had not taken every possible precaution to avert this calamity. He then entered into a detail of the conduct of the Ministers, particularly in raising the late alarm. The bringing forward of the business of an insurrection, he said, was to be considered as a device of the master politicians of the time.—He desired that the whole of the conduct of Ministers might be attended to upon this occasion. On the 21st of May, they had issued a proclamation against seditious writings, which as it was particularly understood to be directed against Paine's publications, had excited a curiosity with respect to that work, where formerly it was not known. During the summer, nothing more had been heard, no prudent precaution had been taken. The retreat of the Duke of Brunswick, which he, along with his honourable friend, as well as every friend of freedom, considered as matter of joy and exultation, had indeed thrown them into confusion ; still however they left matters to be regulated by chance ; nothing was heard, but of Mr. Pitt enjoying the sweets of his new office, and Mr. Dundas in Scotland reaping the fruits of his well-earned popularity. All at once, on the 1st of December, London was surrounded with troops ; the Duke of Richmond threw himself into that post of danger the tower ; an alarm was excited of which neither the object nor the cause could be discovered. His honourable friend had read an extract from an historian on the subject of the Popish plot. He should read a passage from another historian on the same subject, which, in his opinion, might, with great propriety, be applied now to the state of the public mind, and the impression produced by the alarm excited by Ministers : “ Some mysterious design was still suspected in every enterprize and profession : each breath of rumour made the people start with anxiety. While in this timorous, zealous disposition, the cry of a plot all on a sudden struck their ears : they were wakened from their slumber, and like men affrightened, and in the dark, took every figure for a spectre. The terror of each man became the source of terror to another. And an universal panic being diffused, reason and argument, and common sense and common humanity, lost all influence over them.” If Ministers could not state the cause of the alarm which they had excited ; they had subjected

themselves to the severe censure both of that House and the Public : he could not by any means allow that the opinions of an individual should be set above the laws ; and therefore he was of opinion that none but a specific cause could be admitted on this occasion as a justification of those extraordinary measures which had been pursued by Ministry.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, that he never was more astonished than at some things which, in the course of that night's debate, he had heard drop from an honourable gentleman opposite. At the same time, he was extremely happy to express his approbation of the universal reprobation of any system which tended to destroy the radical points of the constitution, a reprobation from which the enemies of the country, both foreign and domestic, might learn that they could expect no leading characters in that House to support or countenance them in any attempts against the constitution. But he was astonished at what the honourable gentleman had said with respect to universal liberty, and the unlimited right of discussion, points in which he differed from the wisdom and practice of all ages and countries, so that he might, upon this occasion, lay claim to the merit of discovery. But had he forgotten, that upon a former occasion, he had acted inconsistently with those maxims which he now delivered, when he had concurred with the Attorney General to bring a prosecution against a libel upon the House of Commons relative to the trial of Mr. Hastings? If it was proper that the House of Commons should then vindicate their character, it was no less reasonable that the other branches of the Legislature should, upon this occasion, when they had been so much attacked, take the means to enforce the respect due to themselves, and support that consequence which justly belonged to them. This country, he affirmed at present to be the only one where the press enjoyed so great a degree of freedom. He would ask, what would now be the consequence in France to him who should dare to make a motion in favour of distressed Royalty? There, no opinions were allowed to be published which were inconsistent with the views of the leading party. The extent to which the honourable gentleman had carried his doctrine of discussion, was inconsistent with the maxims of every Government, and indeed could not be reconciled with the safety of any State. He allowed, indeed, that

part of his reasoning to be fair, which stated, if there existed discontents in consequence of grievances, the proper method of getting rid of those discontents was, to remove the grievances which afforded ground of complaint. But what was to be said, or what conduct could be adopted, when the complaint was not of any particular grievance existing in the constitution; when the redress demanded was not to be accomplished by any partial remedy, but when the constitution itself was held out as a grievance, and nothing less was aimed at than a total subversion of the present system of Government. In this case was it not proper for Ministers to use every means in their power to prevent seditious notions from being instilled into the minds of the lower classes, and to guard them from discontents which might be attended with such fatal consequences. The present question was of the most serious moment, it affected the whole of the constitution. Those people who complained of grievances, were not taught to expect a remedy from the constitution. Doctrines had been inculcated to them of a very different tendency; it had been represented to them, that the present Parliaments, successors of those who sat only three years, had, by their own authority, extended their sittings to a period of seven years; that they were a body wholly corrupted, and incapable of redressing grievances, which they had themselves so great a share in promoting. It was stated; that now was the time for the people to assert their own rights, and to follow that example which had been set them by France.--- The influence of such sentiments on the lower classes was considerable, and many of them had been taught to adopt the language which he had now described. He believed indeed that the great body of the respectable and opulent part of the community were entirely free from such sentiments, and that they were likewise held in abhorrence by the numerous middle class, who formed so important an order of the State. Among these he believed that there prevailed the most perfect attachment to the constitution, and the most determined resolution to support it from every attack. But in consequence of the doctrines which he had represented, the lower classes had been impressed with an idea of liberty and equality, not flowing from the privileges of the constitution; they had been taught to aspire at an equal share in the Legislative Government of

the country, upon the principle that one man is as good as another, and that there ought to be no distinction of claims, since the rights of all were founded upon the same basis. Nay their views had not stopped here; they not only proposed to confound distinctions, but to invade the rights of property, and establish an equal division of possessions among all the Members of the community. An Agrarian law was very familiarly talked of among the common people, a phrase which it is evident they must have acquired from some other source. These were facts, which he stated directly, either from his own observation, or information; and would any one afterwards pretend to assert, that there was no ground for alarm, or to deny the existence of danger? It had been said that the effect of the proclamation had been to circulate more extensively writings of a seditious nature. He would not deny that nothing was more favourable to the success of any work than to render it an object of public curiosity, and that from this cause the very means taken to suppress a publication had often a direct contrary effect. But this had not been the case in the present instance, the people would never have heard of Paine's work, in consequence of the proclamation, if the utmost art and industry had not been used by those, who first promoted that publication, to circulate it among them. It was dispersed throughout the country, and sold at a very low price; it was transmitted to every village; it was contrived that it should find its way even into every cottage. The circulation then was not, as had been stated, the natural consequence of the proclamation; but of the artificial means taken to promote it; it had by these means been forced upon the perusal of every man who was able to read. The only subject of debate this evening, was the existence of that alarm which had been stated to prevail in the country. This alarm had been represented as not founded in any real danger, but merely a device of Ministry to answer their own purposes. And here he could not help adverting to the different and contradictory charges brought against Ministers, as suited the present views of those gentlemen who were hostile to their measures. At one time they were completely vilified, and represented, so far from having any weight in the country, as disregarded and contemned, as distrusted in their measures, and incapable of giving any impres-

sion to the public sentiment. At another time, they were described as having in their hands the whole opinions of the people, as capable to give them any direction they chose; and convert them to any use which might suit the object of their temporary policy, and on this ground it was that they were described as having created the late alarm. But he appealed to the Members coming from the country, and who had opportunities to be acquainted with the situation of the public mind, to declare from their own observation and experience, whether such an alarm had not existed previous to the issuing of the proclamation for calling out the militia, and summoning the attendance of Parliament. The fact was that an universal and most serious alarm had been excited among the country gentlemen, farmers, &c. and some active measures were necessary on the part of government, in order to restore confidence to the country, and prevent the dangers which threatened its security. In Scotland he had been far from idle. With respect to his popularity in that country, if those who had laboured to create prejudices against him had meant to occasion him uneasiness, they had certainly succeeded.

He must own that he loved popularity, and that the odium created against him among his countrymen, from whatever pretence, had afforded him a very disagreeable sensation. He regretted it exceedingly, as in the short visits which his official engagements allowed him to pay to Scotland, he wished to meet all his countrymen, even of the lowest rank, upon the footing of friends and brothers. But he should take a future opportunity to enter into the detail of this business. He should now state that during the last six weeks he had spent in Scotland, he had been visited from every quarter, by the great manufacturers, by Magistrates, and by gentlemen, from parts of the country where there were no Magistrates, all expressing their alarm at the situation of the country; and requesting the interference of Government, to check a spirit which threatened to be attended with such dangerous consequences. He desired gentlemen to attend to the tenor of the King's speech, and then from a view of the whole subject, to pronounce on the legality and propriety of the measures employed by Ministers in the present crisis. He would first call their attention to our situation at home, where there was clearly pursued, a sys-

tematical design to overturn the constitution of the country.—The proceedings of different societies afforded full proof of this assertion. The question of parliamentary reform was no doubt in itself a fair subject of discussion, and might with great propriety be taken up, when the discussion would be attended with no mischief. But under this pretext of a reform a variety of topics had been urged tending to excite discontents in the minds of the people ; the example of France had been held out for imitation, not only with regard to their object, but likewise with regard to the means of attaining that object.—An example had thus been held out of breaking down all distinctions, and giving a blow which should at once prove fatal to the monarchy and aristocracy of the country. Those societies, on the model of the affiliated societies abroad, held a correspondence with France, for the purpose of overturning the constitution, and even sent Members to Paris to procure instructions. When he talked however of these evils, he did not mean to inculcate a sentiment of despondency, or insinuate that no remedy could be found. On the contrary, he considered the present measures adopted by Government as affording that very remedy. To this alarm, which originated from the seditious spirit of the lower classes, was added, the consideration of the situation of this country with respect to foreign parts.

The National Convention had shewn themselves disposed to countenance every complaint of grievances from the discontented and factious in this country ; in proof of which he read an address of several societies, stated to be signed by five hundred persons in this country, presented to the Convention on the 7th of November, and by them ordered to be printed, and copies sent to the armies and all the departments. He likewise mentioned an address from a society in Rochester, of which, however, the authenticity had since been called strongly in question ; the applause, however, with which it was received was a sufficient proof of the temper of the Convention. Was this then not a time for alarm, when persons wished to subvert the Constitution in conjunction with foreign powers. He alluded to that late decree by which the Convention declared their intention to support all who should call for their assistance in asserting their freedom, and asked to be informed

what French liberty meant. It was evidently not the liberty of the British Constitution, composed of a King, Lords, and Commons; that Constitution which we had so long enjoyed, and under which we had experienced so many blessings. Notwithstanding their professions of fraternity, it was evident that what the French had had in view was the aggrandisement of their dominions, and the establishment of their own Government. This was sufficiently proved by their conduct in adding Savoy as an eighty-fourth department, and by their behaviour with respect to Geneva. What right had they to impose their own Constitution in the Netherlands? and why did they now ask Holland to open the Scheldt, but that they might send armed vessels against the Emperor? This demand from the Dutch to such a purpose was a measure with which, as a neutral people, they could by no means comply. Nobody deprecated the calamity of a war more than he did—a calamity which he prayed that God might avert. Ministers had been accused of remissness in not taking the proper precautions to prevent the danger which had now occurred of impending hostility. He should only beg to remark, that on the 20th of November an intention had first been announced on the part of the French to open the Scheldt. The measures of Ministry had been adopted a few days after receiving this information, and Parliament was now met on the 13th of December. He then referred to the treaties which established the right of the Dutch to keep the Scheldt shut: this right went so far back as the treaty of Munster: it was more particularly confirmed by a treaty of 1785, in which the French themselves acted as guaranties. And now that Holland was taken out of the hands of the French, and again united to its natural ally, this country, we were bound to protect them by the most solemn engagements of treaty; and of a treaty too, the ratification of which had afforded matter of such general exultation to all parties. While he prayed that war might be averted, there was an evil which he considered as still more serious than war, and to prevent which a war would certainly be highly justifiable, namely, the farther interposition of France in concert with the discontented persons in this country to subvert the Constitution. The interest and honour of this country equally required that we should protect Holland upon this occasion,



and convince it that it was happier for it in this instance to be connected with Great Britain than any other power. With respect to the question whether the disturbances which had been stated to exist in the country had authorised Ministry to have recourse to the measures which they had taken, or whether an amendment which conveyed censure of these measures ought to be adopted, he should beg leave to say a few words. When the law upon which Ministry had acted added the case of insurrection to those of invasion or rebellion, it certainly meant to authorise the executive power to call out the militia in a case less than either of these latter. If he was asked what strictly constituted an insurrection, he must own that he should find it difficult to give any precise definition. But what he should now state was, that there subsisted a very considerable ferment in the country; that this ferment had broke out in different shapes. What had passed at Yarmouth, Shields, Leith, &c., he could consider as nothing less than an insurrection. Upon these occasions it had been necessary to call in the assistance of the military; and when such alarming appearances displayed themselves, it certainly was the duty of Government to take those precautions which the law authorised for the security of the country and the maintenance of public tranquillity. In Scotland, more particularly, a spirit of turbulence had appeared in several places. Mobs had taken place at Dundee, Perth, and Aberdeen. At Dundee the pretext of the disturbance, in its commencement, was stated to be some discontents with respect to meal; but it was not long before the shouts of liberty and equality were heard to resound from every quarter of the mob assembled upon the occasion. Some even called out No Excise! No King! and they concluded with planting the tree of Liberty, that badge of sedition, that emblem of all those pernicious doctrines connected with that system which France was so desirous to establish, and which so much pains had been taken to inculcate in this country. Upon this occasion the magistrates had been obliged to make application for the assistance of the military, a party of whom, at an instant's warning, had crossed the Frith of Forth. Such were the facts which he had to state, and which, in his opinion, fully justified Ministry in the measures which they had adopted. Whether these facts constituted an insurrection, was a circumstance

which gentlemen on the other side seemed inclinable to dispute. He should not now enter into the contest of words. He should only remark, that a mob on one occasion, and in particular circumstances, might constitute an insurrection, which would not at another period, and in different circumstances. In considering what particular acts might amount to insurrection, regard was to be had to the situation of the country and the spirit of the times. After all, Ministry had certainly acted much better in calling out the militia than by making any addition to the standing force. The militia were a force always at hand, always in readiness to act upon any emergency. They were a force which called forth the property and respectability of the country ; and what was most desirable, put the protection of the country into the hands of those who had most at stake, and were most deeply interested in its welfare. The situation of the country became more critical, and the necessity for the measures adopted by Ministry appeared greater when it appeared that, in addition to domestic alarm, there was likewise superadded foreign alarm. They had now not only to guard against the consequences of those ferments which agitated the country, but to provide for the danger of a foreign war. If Ministers, therefore, should be accused with not having adhered to the letter of the law, he should appeal to the merchants and landed gentlemen whether they did not feel thankful for the precautions which had been taken. The measures which had been taken had not, as was stated from the other side, the effect to excite alarm ; on the contrary, they had tended to remove it, and to restore, in some degree, the confidence and security of the public mind. He wished the honourable gentleman had not alluded to the state of Ireland, of the Legislature of which he was no Member. Ireland had a Legislature of its own, and certainly that House had no right to interfere in discussions, which had not yet received a decision in the proper quarter. The consequence of such unnecessary and premature interference, could only be to provoke those disturbances which it was desirable to avert. He begged to be excused from entering into the subject of Russia and Poland, otherwise than to observe, that if there had not been such a division in the House on the subject of the Russian war, Poland probably would have escaped her present fate.

Mr. FOX rose to explain. He said that he had never laid it down that libels, but only that speculative opinions on Government, ought not to be prosecuted. The libel he had prosecuted was not a speculative opinion, but a positive reflection on the character and conduct of the House of Commons; and he would say, that if a libel were now published, reflecting on the character and conduct of the King, or the character and conduct of the House of Lords, that libel ought likewise to suffer prosecution. When he spoke of Ireland, he expressed himself without any reference to her parliamentary independence. He certainly could not be suspected of any intention to injure an independence, which he had ever been most ready to assert. What he had said, was meant as a lesson to ourselves, and he thought that the more frankness was maintained on the subject, the better would the event prove for both countries. On the subject of Poland, he professed himself ready, at any time, to meet the right honourable gentleman in discussion.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, that though what had been said by his honourable friend fully expressed his opinions, yet he could not prevail upon himself on the present occasion to be wholly silent. The honourable Secretary had in a manner called upon every Member that night to make his probation, to avow his political creed. He had stated as a great acquisition the declarations which had been made on every side of attachment to the constitution. Till the proclamation was issued, that attachment had never been called in question. He believed that there never existed a constitution so dear to the generality of the people. So strong was his persuasion of this, that if a convention were nominated by the free vote of every man in the country, for the purpose of framing a Government, he firmly believed they would express no other wish than for the constitution which had been transmitted to us by the virtue of our ancestors, and would retain the form, the substance, and principles of that constitution. But he trusted that there existed in this country a firm set of men, who would not suffer the errors and abuses of that constitution to be held as sacred as the constitution itself. The imputation contained in the speech, and to which he regretted that an honourable friend of his had subscribed, he considered as highly unjust. It was the

Crown preferring a bill of indictment against the loyalty of the people. That bill was not a true one: If there were really any seditious persons in this country, who wished to overturn the constitution, their numbers were as small as their designs were detestable. Ministers themselves had created the alarm, and it was the duty of that House, before they should proceed farther, to go into an inquiry respecting the circumstances which were alledged as the ground of that alarm.—Should they rely upon the information of ministry, or act in consequence of that information, when there was reason to think that they had themselves forged the plot? He hoped it was not understood that those who rejoiced in the revolution in France likewise approved of all the subsequent excesses. That indeed would be a very unfair mode of reasoning. The honourable Secretary had read an address to the convention, signed by 5000 persons in this country, but which unfortunately had got only one name affixed to it. As to the other address which he had mentioned, the address from a society at Rochester, it appeared to be a clumsy joke upon the convention, as it afterwards turned out that no such society really existed. The formidable band of republicans, who had been mentioned to exist in this country seemed to be men in buckram. The manner in which the addresses from this country had been received by the convention, certainly argued on their part bad dispositions, but was no proof of treacherous designs. But it had been said, would not the description of men who had been represented as entertaining seditious views, wish for a French army to be introduced into this country? Such was his idea of the character of Englishmen, that he should take upon him to assert, that were but one French soldier to land upon our coast upon the idea of effecting any change in our Government, every hand and heart in the country would be roused by the indignity, and unite to oppose so insulting an attempt. Of the riot at Salisbury the honourable gentleman had been completely misinformed, no such riot had existed; and that at Dundee was soon quelled without calling in the military. But what had been done since the militia had been called out? Soldiers brought into the vicinity of the metropolis, and the Tower fortified; and all this, because there had been a riot at Dundee in Scotland. No such measures had been taken in

Scotland when the riot had happened. As to the honourable gentleman's popularity, he was glad that he now prized it more than he had done last year ; but he ought not to wonder that it had been diminished, when he reflected that Scotland had in vain petitioned for six years for a reform in Par'liament. He should take no other notice of his reflections on those whom he represented as having taken pains to deprive him of his popularity, than by saying, that if he wished to know who was that person who had deprived him of his popularity in Scotland, he should answer it was Mr. Secretary Dundas himself.

As to the question of a war, he should vote that English Minister to be impeached, who should enter into a war, for the purpose of re-establishing the former despotism in France, who should dare in such a cause to spend one guinea, or spill one drop of blood. A war in the present moment he considered ought only to be undertaken on the ground of the most inevitable necessity. He did not consider the opening of the Scheldt as a sufficient ground for war, nor did he believe that the Dutch would on this account apply to this country for its hostile interference, unless they had previously received instructions for the purpose.

Mr. THOMAS GRENVILLE rose, to explain the precise grounds upon which he should wish to vote for an amendment. Last session, struck with the danger to which this country was exposed by a seditious spirit that had made its appearance, he was desirous of calling upon the Executive Government to take such measures as might be effectual to oppose its progress. Upon this ground he had voted for the proclamation that was brought forward. He had no reason now to regret his vote, except that he had then the misfortune to differ in opinion with those honourable gentlemen with whom, upon most other occasions, he agreed. All the advantages had resulted from the measure which he desired or expected, and the spirit of sedition had been fully met by that spirit of loyalty which had manifested itself on the part of the people. Such was the state of affairs, when a proclamation makes its appearance for summoning Parliament, within fourteen days, a measure entirely new, and grounded upon the country then being in a state of actual insurrection. Nothing that had been

mentioned appeared to him by any means equivalent to an insurrection. He was of opinion that the state of the country was ill described by the proclamation, and he was the more induced to come forward with this opinion ; as he was apprehensive that danger might arise from such exaggeration. It was the more necessary to use caution on the present occasion, as this was the first instance in which this law had been employed, and the first use of a law always gives great weight to its future and subsequent application. He had only one word to say on the conduct of Government, with respect to the French. The system of neutrality which they had hitherto adopted, had met with the most perfect approbation of the people, and he trusted that they would not lightly depart from it. The more just and moderate our conduct was towards them, on the better grounds should we be able to enter into a war with them, if their conduct, on the contrary, should prove insolent and overbearing.

Mr. BURKE said, that this was indeed a day of trial of the constitution. He agreed with an honourable gentleman in regarding the present as a most momentous crisis, but for different reasons from those which he had assigned. He congratulated the House on the Chief Magistrate of the city of London having come forward in a manner so honourable to himself, and could not let slip this occasion of paying a just tribute to the services which the city of London had at different times rendered to the constitution, under whose auspices it had risen to its present opulence and grandeur. It had distinguished itself by the part which it acted both in the restoration and revolution. It was sensible how closely liberty and monarchy were connected in this country, that they were never to be found asunder ; that they had flourished together a thousand years ; and that from this union had resulted the glory and prosperity of the nation.

While he did justice to the talents and eloquence of a right honourable gentleman, (Mr. Fox) whom nobody could more highly respect and admire than himself, and whom he should rejoice to see occupying an important station in the administration of the country, for which he was so well qualified, he could not help remarking, that on the present occasion he had taken up a great many invidious points, which he might have

spared, without any injury to his argument. He had asserted that the statement of an insurrection was a calumny on the country. But did the proclamation say that the whole country was in a state of insurrection? He would ask the right honourable gentleman, whom he could only compare to Cicero, whether, when Cicero affirmed in the senate, that there existed within the walls of Rome itself a conspiracy for burning and destroying that great city, he was guilty of a libel upon the people of Rome, or only upon Catiline? The charge of insurrection made in the proclamation, was not a charge upon the country, but only upon some people in it. But the alarm which had been excited, had been said to be artificial, and ranked among the number of false plots. The Popish plot had been brought forward, as affording an instance of a similar device, for the purpose of creating alarm, to what had been employed on this occasion. But were there no instances of real plots to be found in this country? What was become of the gunpowder plot, and the different plots which were formed against Queen Elizabeth? False plots would never have been believed, if there had not sometimes been true. This reasoning, therefore, against the reality of the alarm which had taken place, was by no means conclusive. He had been not a little surprised at a violent declamation in favour of liberty, which had fallen from the right honourable gentleman, as if, on the present occasion, liberty was placed on the one hand, and despotism on the other. He, for his own part, declared himself to be not a defender of ministry or of opposition, but of the country in France he would affirm there existed no true liberty. As a proof that liberty was enjoyed, he would ask, is life, is property, secure? Was this the case in France, where both were every moment exposed to danger, and where, instead of one Bastille, a Bastille was now erected in every parish? He was one of those who lamented the retreat of the Duke of Brunswick; and he must own, that he thought even a despotism, where life and property were secure, preferable to that state of liberty, where both were continually liable to be invaded. What he dreaded, should French principles be introduced into this country, was the destruction of the whole order of civil life, not only that we should lose King, Lords, and Commons; but our property, our wives, every thing that

was dear and sacred. Who would wish the morals of the present Legislators of France to be introduced into this country? What parent would wish his son to resemble a Carra, a Marat, a Danton, a Robespierre? Or would he wish him to copy the example of a Petion? Or should he search the deepest recesses of Hell, where could he find a more complete model of depravity than Monsieur Egalité?

He would affirm, that there was a faction in this country, who wished to submit it to France, in order that our Government might be reformed upon the French system. He would likewise affirm, that the French cherished views upon this country; that they encouraged this faction, and were disposed to aid them in their views of overturning our constitution. As a proof of this, he should translate from their own Gazette the following account of their proceedings:

“ The President—“ You decreed yesterday, that two deputations of Englishmen should be admitted to the bar. I am going to order it to be opened for them.”

“ The first deputation being admitted, the spokesman addressed the convention as follows:

“ Citizens, Legislators!

“ The British and Irish citizens resident at Paris, constantly animated by those principles which have given rise and success to the French revolution, met last Sunday to celebrate the success of your arms, and agreed to present to you their sentiments, and to congratulate you on those events which are so favourable an omen for all people who wish to become free. Receive then that pure and fraternal homage of men who bear in their hearts all the principles of that constitution which you are going to give to your country. Hitherto wars have been only undertaken to gratify the ambition and pride of despots. You have taken up arms only to make reason and liberty triumph. We hope the troops of liberty will not lay them down until there shall be no more tyrants or slaves.”

“ The President answered the deputation as republicans.—He said, “ Royalty in Europe was in the agonies of death; that the declaration of rights now placed by the side of Thrones, was a fire which in the end would consume them;



“ and he even hoped that the time was not far distant when  
“ France, England, Scotland, and Ireland—all Europe! all  
“ mankind! would form but one peaceful family.”

“ The second deputation was from the constitutional so-  
“ ciety of London, and consisted of Joel Barlow and J. Frost,  
“ who presented an address, congratulating the French on the  
“ revolution they had accomplished, and the success that had  
“ attended their arms; expressing a hope at the same time  
“ that other nations would soon follow their example. The  
“ deputies added, that they had sent 1000 pair of shoes as a  
“ patriotic gift to the soldiers of liberty. The address was  
“ signed by Lord Sempill, President, and D. Adams, Secre-  
“ tary.”

The reading of this detail he accompanied with many remarks. These proceedings, he said, had taken place on the same day, in which there had been a discussion in the convention respecting the union of Savoy to France. On that occasion, the President had observed, that nature pointed out this union; that France and Savoy were already connected by physical and moral ties. This gentle people, in adding the country of their neighbours to their own dominions, only follow the mild laws of nature; whenever they have a mind to make an acquisition of territory, they discover their claim to it to be established by physical and moralities: no doubt they will soon find out this physical and moral connection subsisting between them and this country, though we unfortunately have been separated from them by a violent convulsion: of those persons, who had signed the address from the society for constitutional information, he knew little or nothing, excepting John Frost: he was notorious; his character, he believed, was pretty well known to both sides of the House; the gentlemen of the Treasury particularly had reason to be acquainted with it. If Englishmen, he remarked, had in this manner applied to Louis XVI. to reform our Government, and had been favourably received by him, would not this have been considered as an aggression by this country? It was, indeed, a portent and prodigy that Englishmen should not be able to find liberty at home, and should be obliged to seek it elsewhere. What rendered the factious in this country particularly dangerous, was their connection with the band of French robbers and

assassins. The French had declared war against all Kings, and of consequence against this country, if it had a King.—The question now was not whether we should make an address to the Throne, but whether we should have a Throne at all? He concluded with recommending the unanimity so desirable upon this occasion, and with representing the danger which might arise from the progress of the French arms, if not speedily resisted: their power had already become formidable to the whole of Europe, and if we would not have Europe gone from us, it was necessary that we should interpose by the most effectual means to stop their farther career.

Mr. ANSTRUTHER said, there were two questions before the House, 1. With respect to the existence of an insurrection; 2. The expedience of the measures that had been adopted by administration. Gentlemen affected to undervalue the alarm which had reached from one end of the nation to the other, and which had existed in a very strong degree eight or ten days before ministry had recourse to the measure of issuing the proclamations. He asked, if those writings which had been published and circulated with so much industry, had not a tendency to vilify every part of our Constitution? He desired gentlemen to recollect the mischiefs which had happened five years before the bill had passed, authorizing His Majesty to call out the militia, and summon Parliament, in cases of insurrection, from want of similar precautions to those which had been employed on this occasion. He stated, that there were insurrections of different sorts, and that the nature of the insurrection was determined by the circumstances which attended it. In adverting to the situations of this country, as influenced by the present state of affairs in France, he went over the same ground that had been taken up by the preceding speaker. He thought that the amendment implied a great deal more than it held out, and was intended to convey a censure of the whole conduct of administration. For his own part, he believed the existence and reality of the danger, and that Ministers, so far from exciting a premature or groundless alarm, had rather been too late in adopting their measures of precaution. For these reasons, he heartily concurred in approving of the address. With respect to what had been said of a foreign war, he certainly considered war at all times as a cala-

mity, but if a war was right, it became our duty bravely and boldly to meet it, and we should thus make the calamity less.

Mr. HUSSEY stated that there had been no riot in Salisbury. A journeyman printer, at a public house, having drank the health of " Thomas Paine, and d—n the King," was delivered into custody: but the soldiery arrived at Salisbury after this event, and not at the requisition of any Magistrate of the city. Except this circumstance which he had stated, there had been no riot whatever.

Mr. Dundas, Sir George Yonge, and Mr. Hussey entered into a conversation on this circumstance, in the course of which it was explained that the soldiers had been sent at the requisition of a Magistrate of the country, and in consequence of some riot apprehended at the market place.

Mr. HUSSEY expressed how much on this occasion he wished for unanimity, and how very fortunate a circumstance he should consider it, if all the Members could be brought to concur in the expression of the same sentiments.

Colonel MACLEOD stated, that those concerned in the riot at Dundee, which had been so much exaggerated by the honourable Secretary, were merely boys, the eldest of whom did not exceed 16, who had met together for the purpose of playing at the game of planting the tree of liberty, a diversion which he had no doubt was as harmless with them as any amusement whatever.

Mr. ERSKINE said, that he felt very great anxiety on the present occasion, as a Member of a society for reform, from the general description which had been given of those societies, as associated under specious pretexts of reform, but in reality for very different purposes. He professed himself as much attached to the constitution as any man. From his connection with a great personage, he should be the last to come forward to injure that constitution. The disturbances which were now so much talked of, might be traced back to their origin: none of them had existed at the time the proclamation made its appearance. There had certainly been great remissness on the part of Ministers, since no information had been exhibited against that work, against which the proclamation was chiefly directed, till a year and a half after its publication. No alarm

had in fact been excited, till that society with whom he was connected had come forward, for the purpose of a reform in Parliament. But what was the ground of danger, since the honourable Secretary had himself stated, that not only all the higher and more respectable class of the community, but likewise all the middle class, who composed nine tenths of the whole, were perfectly attached to the constitution, and prepared to defend it from every attack. Several reflections had, in the course of the debate, been thrown out on a work which was the subject of prosecution; the trial would come on in a few days, and he intreated gentlemen not to prejudge the cause. With respect to France, a right honourable gentleman had given a very different representation of the state of that country, from what he had done in a work published two years since. That nation, which he had then placed in so contemptible a point of view, and to which he had predicted nothing but calamity and disgrace, he now described as every where extending its conquests, and become formidable to the whole of Europe. So far he had seen occasion to alter his sentiments. But if this nation was become so formidable, was this a reason why we should go to war with her, or not rather seek to avert it? Or if the people were that desperate band of robbers and assassins which the right honourable gentleman had represented, were these to be considered desirable enemies? The right honourable Secretary had prayed that "God might avert a war." What did he mean by this expression? The other right honourable gentleman had complained much of attacks made upon the Crown; the Crown never was attacked, till it had the misfortune to have him for a defender.

He would submit to the House, whether they would chuse to maintain the constitution by coercion; whether they would hold out the idea to the people that they were bound down to adhere to it, as it now existed, or would not rather chuse, in addressing them, to adopt the language, "There's your constitution, handed down to you from your fathers, created by their wisdom, preserved by their virtue; it is now yours? It was made by your fathers, it may be unmade by you; upon your love and attachment it depends for its support." He was convinced, that it was the wisdom of that House to govern the people by their affections, and instead of

loading them with abuse and calumny, to meet their complaints, to redress their grievances, and by granting them a fair representation, remove the ground of their dissatisfaction. He begged that that House might discuss with temper what related to French affairs. If we were on the eve of a war, he certainly could not consider it as good policy to make foreign powers believe that there existed dissensions among ourselves. The people were already taxed to a most enormous extent; and should a war be the consequence, when it appeared that every precaution had not been taken to prevent it, they would incur a most heavy responsibility, both to the Public and to that House, for having precipitated the nation into so great a calamity.

Colonel HARTLEY rose, to express his confidence in the measures adopted by Ministers, as tending to render permanent that high state of prosperity to which the country had risen, and secure to Britain the distinguished rank which she held among the nations.

Mr. W. SMITH defended the French from the charge of distributing money for seditious purposes in this country, and declared, that the English constitution was the last constitution on earth which they wished to alter. As Mr. Burke had expressed a doubt as to the possibility of our ever receiving an Ambassador from France at our Court, he asked him to refer to the mode in which Cromwell's Ambassador was received at the Court of Louis the Fourteenth, and accused him of intentional misrepresentation, in speaking as if the French Government was in the hands of the promoters of the massacres in Paris. He vindicated the Protestant Dissenters from the charge of disaffection, by reading a declaration from that body, expressive of their attachment to the constitution.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL stated the different modes which seditious persons had adopted in order to work on the minds of the lower orders of people, by passing up bills, dropping letters down the areas of houses, &c. He stated, in reply to some expressions that had dropped from Mr. Erskine, that so far from having been remiss in his duty relative to seditious publications, he had on his file two hundred informations. The delay which had taken place in prosecuting a particular work, arose from the length of time necessary to be employed

in taking the previous steps, before a prosecution could be commenced.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL entered into a detail of the law by which Parliament had on this occasion been so suddenly called together: cases of insurrection, he remarked, were not, as had been stated, now for the first time introduced into law as authorizing His Majesty to call out the militia, and summon Parliament; the same power had been given in former laws, though in some late instances the case of insurrection, which was now acted upon, was omitted; the phrase some how or other had then slipped out of the law, and was now only revived.

Mr. FOX said, that very much of what he had said had either been misrepresented, or misunderstood in the course of the debate. The application which had been made to him to withdraw his amendment, however he respected the quarter from which it came, he must resist. After the sentiments which he and other gentlemen had expressed, unanimity was impossible: unanimity on the present occasion, he must own was what he should deprecate. He gave notice, that he should attend to-morrow to propose other amendments upon the report.

The House divided ;

For the address	—	290
For the amendment	—	50
		<hr/>
Majority		240

The House adjourned.

The following is a correct List of the MINORITY, who voted for the Amendment on the Address to His Majesty.

## MEMBERS.

## SIT FOR.

Right Hon. Charles James Fox	Westminster
Charles Grey, Esq.	Northumberland
Richard Brinsley Sheridan, Esq.	Stafford
Right Hon. Lord G. A. H. Cavendish	Derby
Lord Edward Bentinck	Nottinghamshire
Lord John Russell	Tavistock
Lord William Russell	Surrey
Earl Wycombe	Chipping Wycombe
Viscount Milton	Malton
Hon. T. Erskine	Portsmouth
Hon. Lionel Damer	Peterborough

Hon. T. Maitland	Sedburgh, &c.
George Byng, Esq.	Middlesex
William Hufley, Esq.	Salisbury
John Crewe, Esq.	Cheshire
William Baker, Esq.	Hertfordshire
Dudley North, Esq.	Great Grimsby
John Courtenay, Esq.	Tamworth
John Shaw Stuart, Esq.	Renfrewshire
Sir Henry Fletcher, Bart.	Cumberland
Hon. Richard Bingham	St. Alban's
J. N. Edwards, Esq.	Rutlandshire
Lee Anthony, Esq.	Great Marlow
William Adam, Esq.	Rosshire
William Plumer, Esq.	Hertfordshire
Henry Howard, Esq.	Arundel
Right Hon. Lord Robert Spencer	Whareham
Philip Francis, Esq.	Blechingly
James Martin, Esq.	Tewksbury
William Smith, Esq.	Camelford
Thomas Thompson, Esq.	Evesham
B. Tarleton, Esq.	Liverpool
Hon. St. Andrew St. John	Bedfordshire
Charles Sturt, Esq.	Bridport
Benjamin Vaughan, Esq.	Calne
Cunliff Shaw, Esq.	Preston
R. S. Milnes, Esq.	York
Edward Bouverie, Esq.	Northampton
Thomas Grenville, Esq.	Aldborough
Roger Wilbraham, Esq.	Bodmyn
John Wharton, Esq.	Beverly
Right Hon. R. Fitzpatrick	Tavistock
Samuel Whitbread, jun Esq.	Bedford
Norman Macleod, Esq.	Invernesshire
Joseph Jekyll, Esq.	Calne
Thomas Whitmore, Esq.	Bridgnorth
Sir John Aubrey, Bart.	Clitherow
Sir John Jervis, K. B.	Chipping Wycombe
J. R. Burch, Esq.	Thetford
John Harcourt, Esq.	Ilchester
M. A. Taylor, Esq.	Poole
W. H. Lambton, Esq.	Durham.

} Tellers

*Friday, 14th December.*

The LORD MAYOR brought up the report of the address agreed upon last night. It was read a first time. On the second reading, when the clerk came to that part of it which contains a contingent probability of our being involved in a war,

Mr. FOX said, that part of the address which praised the Executive Government for its neutrality, could not possibly be applauded by any man in that House. So far was he from thinking that Ministers deserved praise in that respect, that he

thought the House of Commons ought to impeach them. His opinion was, that from the moment they knew a league was formed against France, this country ought to have interfered; France had justice completely on her side, and we, by a prudent negotiation with the other powers, might have prevented the horrid scenes which were afterwards exhibited, and saved too the necessity of being reduced to our present situation. We should by this have held out to Europe a lesson of moderation, of justice, and of dignity, worthy of a great empire; this was his opinion, with respect to the conduct, which ought to have been adopted, but it was what Ministers neglected. There was one general advantage, however, resulting from this, it taught the proudest men in this world that there is an energy in the cause of justice, which, when once supported, nothing can defeat. Thank God, nature had been true to herself, tyranny was defeated, and those who fought for freedom were triumphant. Indeed, all those who spoke for the Ministry in the debate last night, insisted that France had formed views of aggrandizement and general dominion. If so, why thank the King's Ministers for their neutrality, when, if they are right now upon their own principles they should have formerly interfered to have checked their career? He concluded, that it was impossible, without abandoning all consistency, to approve of the address. Whoever conceived him to be of opinion that the aggrandizement of France was matter of indifference to this country, mistook him grossly. France certainly had aggrandized herself. She had disappointed the predictions of that gentleman, who, during the last session of Parliament, in speaking of the opponents of Great Britain on the continent, exclaimed, "There is no danger from any quarter? looking "into the map of Europe, I see a *Chas'm* once called France." That chas'm, however, the gentleman must now confess was filled. No longer would he be able to speak of the inhabitants of that nation as having once been famous—*Gallos olim bello floruisse*. They had conducted themselves in such a manner, as to induce him to be of opinion, that the power of France might be formidable to this country. She was formidable under her monarchy, when in alliance with Spain, and in friendship with Austria. But France, with finances almost ruined---France, in enmity with Austria, and certainly not in



amity with Spain, was much more formidable now ; she was formidable now from her freedom, the animated effects of which were beyond the calculation of man. All the inhabitants of Europe, who felt any thing in the cause of freedom, held a sympathy for them, and wished them success, regarding them as men struggling with tyrants and despots, while they were endeavouring to form for themselves a free Government ; but, perhaps, he should be told, that France has no free Government. In order to shorten that question for the present, he would say, from the works of a certain author, “ That a “ free Government for all practical purposes is that which the “ people consider as such ;” so it was with the French, during the whole of the last campaign. They had been successful on account of the nature of their cause. Courage, and all the bolder virtues, naturally attend freedom. Let us not foolishly continue that absurd prejudice, that none but Englishmen deserve to be free. Liberty had no attachment to soil ; it was the inheritance of man over every part of this globe, and where enjoyed, always produced the same effect. With these sentiments, he could not but be of opinion, that the conduct of Great Britain ought to be peculiarly prudent, and above all, strictly just ; she ought immediately to acknowledge the power of France, and to adopt all honourable means of procuring peace ; she ought to weigh all the consequences of the war, to view with a scrutinizing eye the nature and extent of her resources at home, and to ascertain the degree of assistance which she might expect from her allies ; she should most certainly consider well the situation of Ireland. Much had it surprized him last night, that a gentleman, who from his situation ought to be expected to be something of a statesman, had asserted that the state of Ireland ought not to be alluded to. What ! was not the condition of Ireland to be considered in a question that implicated a war ? Indeed it ought to be, and seriously and solemnly too. It ought to be considered, that in that country, there were millions of persons in a state of complete disfranchisement, and very little elevated above slaves. Would any man in his senses suppose that hearty support could be expected from that kingdom in the event of a war ? Indeed, indeed, the blood and treasures of this country ought not to be lightly risked. The time was come when Ministers would not per-

haps think it prudent to go to war on the mere prerogative of the Crown; they would think the approbation of the Parliament and of the people necessary, indispensably necessary; but it remained with the House to consider whether a war ought to be entered into at all, if it were to be conducted by those who composed the present administration. It ought to be considered also how small would be the effect which they were capable of producing in the Courts of Europe. What Court, he would ask, would be elevated by their promises, or intimidated by their menaces, after their timid conduct with respect to Russia? It should be considered likewise, that it was doubtful whether our allies would rely on us, or whether we could rely on them. The retreat of the Duke of Brunswick, he did not believe depended on us, but was such a consequence as the poet had described---

“ Ask why from Britain, Cæsar made retreat,

“ Cæsar might make reply, that he was beat.”

On Prussia, in spite of the near connection that subsisted, he did not think that this country could entirely depend, for domestic occurrences in that kingdom might render it unable to afford us much assistance. On the Emperor, no reliance was to be placed at all. Having thus stated some reasons flowing out of the situation of the allies of Great Britain and of Ireland, he begged to advert to some other circumstances. The cause of a war, at least the apparent one, would be the invasion of Holland by the French. In Holland, it ought to be remembered, that there were persons disaffected to the Stadtholderian government, who possessed not a small degree of power. These persons could not certainly be expected to approve of the war. But much reliance had been placed on Amsterdam. The aristocratic principles of that city would, it was said, be in unison with the war, and the opening of the Scheldt would procure from Amsterdam efficacious support to Great Britain. To those who used this argument, he begged leave to suggest the case of Brabant. The Clergy of Brabant, who had the ear of the people, were supposed, with reason, to be inimical to the progress of the French arms, which would most probably curtail their immense possessions. This aristocracy of the Clergy, however, was of no avail; for as soon as the French approach-

ed, the people of Brabant received them with open arms. If such effects had been produced in that country, might not the same effects be produced in Amsterdam?

Having thus animadverted on the situation of the administration of Great Britain, on the state of Ireland, the allies, and of Holland, he adverted to the condition of this country. Insurrections were alledged to exist, and one honourable Member last night declared, that wherever he went he discovered a spirit of disaffection and discontent. To that honourable Member (Mr. Wyndham) he begged to avail himself of the opportunity of paying a small tribute. To the soundest heart he joined the clearest head; and while no man possessed more honourable principles, few could boast of an understanding so comprehensive, vigorous, and acute. In short, to sum up his character in a few words, he was the representative of that most excellent patriot, the late Sir George Saville. With this opinion, however, of his honourable friend, he could not assent to his declaration of the existence of a spirit of disaffection and discontent. As far as he had been able to judge, he had not made any discovery of so alarming a nature. But if it were true, if there were some foundation for the report of the disaffection of the lowest orders of the people, it became a serious point to determine whence, in case of war, recruits were to be expected for the army and navy. Having stated this, he did not mean to use it as an argument against a war, because he disbelieved *in toto* the existence of such a disaffection. He had argued on the impropriety of a war from positive facts, and incontrovertible reasoning. The next object of his consideration was the state of Scotland. In the debate of last night Mr. Dundas had, in a manly manner, acknowledged that his popularity was in a great degree lost in that country. This was certainly to be ascribed to the shameful indignity with which the House of Commons had treated the petitions for the reform of the Scotch Boroughs. It had been said, that the people of Scotland were better informed than the common people of England. If this were the fact, it was lamentable to know, that the disaffection had proceeded from their superiority of knowledge. If this were the fact, it followed as a natural conclusion, that the Government of this country was only to be supported by ignorance. But he did not believe that this

was the fact. He imputed the disaffection to this cause—that the Scotch had been more practically injured than the English. All these considerations operated as reasons for our taking time to consider upon this important business. But now the question came, how were the calamities of war to be avoided in this case? He would answer—"By negotiation". Open a negotiation with the Republic of France, and try every step that can be taken before you expose your country to the horrors of war. This, he said, was the duty of Government. With the Minister, perhaps, the season of negotiation might be past; but it was not past with the House of Commons, which ought not to be implicated in the crime. If he were asked when the Minister ought to have negotiated, he would inform him. He should have negotiated to prevent the invasion of the Duke of Brunswick. Perhaps he did nothing. This, however, he was certain that he did: He prorogued the Parliament; he appeared careless about the conquest of Brabant and Flanders, which were, in a manner, the gates of Holland; and he seemed to have reasoned thus: "The town I will defend, but any body may possess the gates who please." Perhaps, indeed, the Ambassador of that republic would not be fine enough in his appearance to figure in our drawing-room, and therefore we must not endure the thought of a negotiation. If that was the case, Ministers should say so, in order that the good people of England might know the important reason why their blood must be spilled, and their treasure squandered. If so, the age of chivalry was revived with a vengeance; but he trusted that some more substantial reason should be given for going to war, and that whenever we do go to war, the Minister will have to say to the Public, we have tried the effect of a negotiation, and pacific expressions, but to no purpose: then they might expect a general concurrence, but until then they would certainly be inexcusable in proceeding to hostilities. Alluding to Mr. Burke's speech last night, he declared, that he did not think he had been treated with civility; it was said, by that gentleman, that he advanced facts which he did not believe; he had thoughts that Mr. Burke knew him too well to suppose, that he ever asserted what he did not believe. In fact, he declared in his speech last night, that he would not make assertions with respect to particular cases, through an apprehension

that those cases might not be founded in truth. The reasoning Mr. Burke had adopted on account of this delicacy, was perfectly novel. He had been accused by the same gentleman, of using more invective than argument. On this head he was perfectly sure that his invective was not superior to that of the right honourable gentleman, who could not forget that he had inveighed against all the leading men in France, against one in particular, Mr. Roland, whom he believed to be a man of the strictest honour, and of the most unfulfilled integrity. How far this invective tended to conciliate France, it would not require much deliberation to determine. He then proceeded to enforce the propriety of negotiation. So well convinced was he that every hour we delayed this negotiation was a loss to us, that he should move to-morrow, "An address to his Majesty to treat with the French republic." This he should do with more conviction of its propriety than of its success; that consideration should not slacken his efforts; all the world would acknowledge it by and bye, although so many affected to despise it now. He was the first to throw off the prejudice which was once so general in this country against the infant freedom, and afterwards independence, of America. He was old enough to remember the names of Washington and Adams, those two great and noble pillars of republicanism, loaded with abuse. He was old enough to remember, when their remonstrance, on behalf of the American States, was treated with contempt. Doctor Franklin was, on that occasion, abused without mercy by a learned gentleman; and yet shortly after all this contempt, these same two gentlemen contributed to the forming for the people who enjoyed it, the first constitution in the world—for them most certainly, the best form of Government upon earth, for so he would venture to say was the Government of America. Shortly after this he, as Secretary of State, sent over to America to treat with this very Dr. Franklin on behalf of this country; this he must have done with an ill grace, if he had joined in the abuse of that gentleman, and therefore he did not wish to be forward in shewing his contempt. In short, the republic of France was that which we must acknowledge sooner or later; and where was the difficulty of acknowledging it now? Was not the republic of this country readily acknowledged at the time of Cromwell? Did

not Courts vie in their civilities to our new form of Government after the execution of Charles? An execution, whatever difference of opinion might be entertained about it, which had infinitely less injustice in it than that which was about to be inflicted on the late unhappy Monarch of France; but he hoped a deed so foul would not be committed.—After pathetically lamenting the fate of that unhappy family, he returned to the affairs of France, as likely to affect this country. We wanted to check the aggrandizement of France; perhaps not to go to war with them was to check their aggrandizement, for their cause upon the continent was popular. They said, “that all Governments were their foes.” This was too true, and had been of popular service to them; but that which served them most of all was, the detestation all Europe had for the principles of the leaders of the combined armies. They had neither honour nor humanity. When the brave but unfortunate La Fayette, by the pressure of irresistible circumstances, fell into their possession—instead of receiving him as a gentleman, with the dignity that was due to his distress, they seized him with fury, locked him up like a felon, and cruelly continued to keep him in custody, in defiance of the wishes and compassion of us all, and in a manner that must provoke the indignation of every virtuous man in Europe. But this gentleman had always been a friend to liberty, and that was enough to excite their hatred. Mr. Fox concluded with moving an amendment to the address,

“Trusting that your Majesty will employ every species of negotiation to prevent the calamities of war, that may be deemed consistent with the honour and dignity of the British nation.”

Mr. SHERIDAN seconded the amendment, which, if adopted, would still, he believed; rescue the country from a war. Administration had been uniformly ignorant of the affairs of France. If they had not been, they might have prevented the present alarm, and have saved the life of the unfortunate King of France. Peace, if peace could be obtained, he wished by all means. If it could not be obtained, he should vote for vigorous war, not a war of shifts and scraps, of timid operation or protracted effort, but a war conducted with such

energy, as shall evince to the world that the nation was fighting for its dearest and most invaluable privileges.

After the amendment had been read from the Chair,

Mr. YORKE rose to speak ; but said only a few words, as Mr. Burke had risen at the same time.

Mr. BURKE, considering it as admitted that France must not be permitted to open the Scheldt, and that she must also be either induced by negotiation, or compelled by arms, to restore the conquests she had made, thought it a very extraordinary way of effecting either purpose, to represent our internal situation as rotten, and our allies not to be depended on. With regard to our internal situation, he esteemed it far from being rotten, though the constitution was certainly assailed by persons whose activity, if not checked in time, may be likely to endanger it. As to the fidelity of our allies, if it was not now to be relied on, surely Mr. Fox did not take the best mode of confirming it, by acknowledging the sovereignty, and entering into negotiations with the new Republic of France, their most inveterate enemy. But supposing the policy of such negotiation, were we sure that the French would come to any reasonable terms with us ? And yet this was the contingency for which we were to renounce our present friends, the ancient and established governments in Europe. This would indeed be reducing ourselves to a curious dilemma, and leaving ourselves entirely at the mercy of France, from which, if any ever expected mercy, they were sure to be disappointed. This abominable Government had not yet been recognised by any other power. And what was the peculiar time when we were desired to address an Ambassador to them ? At the very moment, perhaps, when the merciless savages had their hands red with the blood of a murdered Sovereign ; thus giving sanction to an act which barbarians would condemn, giving currency to the crime of regicide, and affording a preliminary to the murder of our own Sovereign.

At present it was only decreed that France was a republic, but of what kind had not been yet certainly determined, nor could any conjecture be formed on it. If he had any merit at all, it was in having read industriously and attentively, and of course the origin and composition of republics had not escaped him. It was observed, that all dogs went by the same name,

though no species of animals contained a greater diversity.— Thus it may be said of republics. Those of Holland, Venice, Genoa, &c. &c. differ widely in their Governments, yet they were such as Ambassadors may be sent to; for they were not regicidal republics, nor republics of confraternity with the seditious and disaffected in every state. France stood alone in the list of republics, and was the only one since the creation that maintained fundamental principles of universal union, seduction and confraternity. To some it appeared a Government of universal conquest, to others of universal anarchy, but to all of universal influence and sway. It bore no resemblance whatever to any of its contemporaries or predecessors—“*Jum* “*nova pestis adest;*” and Mr. Fox, in comparing it to other republics, was in the situation of a Law Serjeant, who pleading in one of the Courts, was told by the Judge, “Brother, “your case does not apply:” to which the Serjeant answered, “I know that, my Lord, and I wish to Heaven it did.”

It had for some time been the fashion in the House to quote him as an author, from a book he wrote upon the revolution in France; and in doing so this evening, Mr. Fox fell into a practice that has been pursued before him by Mr. Mackintosh, and other writers of less eminence—namely, taking a detached passage without explaining it by what followed or went before it. The practical form of a free Government, as quoted, did not express fully his ideas of liberty. Definitions may and had often been given, but it perhaps would be better expressed by a description. What he meant then by liberty was, that he should be suffered to enjoy life as long as the Almighty permitted him—that his person should be free while he conformed to the laws—that he should not be disturbed in the exercise of his religion—and that he should be left at the full enjoyment and disposal of his property, whether inherited or acquired by his industry. If he was protected in the free exercise of all these, as was the case in England, he must think himself in the possession of rational freedom; and this, though not a definition, was at least an inventory of freedom. The Rights of Man, however, were not confined to this; but were founded upon plausible deductions and metaphysical abstractions—true in some parts, and equally false in others. They were like the neck of a drake, blue on one side and black on the



other. When the knowledge of these rights was diffused amongst the multitude, he could not but tremble for the consequence; nor indeed could he hear without emotions of horror, the application made of them to property in frequent discussions on the French revolution. It was this kind of application which caused most of the horrors of the French revolution.--- He perceived that the House not only approved his sentiments on this subject, but received them with acclamations; yet he could not augur the same success, if he went to preach those doctrines to a beggar. Were he to say to a man, "I have a good house, excellent cattle, fine furniture, pictures, tapestry, laces, plate, and delicious fare, but—you want your dinner;" he was apprehensive that he should find some difficulty in convincing him, that the superfluities recounted ought not to be employed in the relief of his necessities. The times would be truly alarming indeed, when these French notions should prevail in this country, and property suffer the same transfer that it had done in that miserable nation.

On this idea of equality contained in the French system of the Rights of Man may it be accounted for, that in the last and present National Assemblies was not to be found a man worth a single shilling; or if there should be two or three exceptions, they only proved his rule. In frequent conversations with persons of discernment, he heard it argued, that a Government formed of such fellows could have no energy.--- He on the contrary was of a different opinion, and attributed to that indignant condition of their rulers, the successes lately obtained by the French, and the vigour of their proceedings. He appealed to the House, whether their reluctance to a war did not proceed in some degree from the care they had for the preservation of their riches. The Legislators of France, on the contrary, having nothing to lose, so they have little to fear, and had no objection to go to war with the whole world.— When the King of Prussia was marching to Paris they were little concerned, and were preparing to escape with the treasures of which they had plundered the people. When threatened with an English war the cry was nearly the same: "Let them come on, said they; they have riches and commerce, and we have neither: we may gain something, and can lose nothing. Such were the men who had the power of levy-

ing what taxes they pleased upon the people, and of converting the produce to what purposes they pleased.

The extravagance of Anacharsis Cloots, in wishing to embrace China, Quebec, Bulam, and in short all the world, in the confraternity of France, was not peculiar to him, but was also entertained by all the Members of the Assembly. This Cloots, he said, was an old acquaintance and correspondent of his, being very respectably introduced to him, and had no small share in producing the French revolution. He was a Prussian by birth, highly conversant in every branch of literature, and much better qualified to act the part of a philosopher than John Frost as a deputy from the people of Great Britain. In June 1790 this man appeared at the bar of the National Assembly, accompanied by men of all nations, Asiatic, African, and European, of which latter the English made no inconsiderable part. There, as orator of the human race, he invoked for them all the protection and confraternity of France; and this happened on the very day when the Assembly demolished, by a decree, the nobility of France.

The French republic was *sui generis*, and bore no analogy to any other which ever existed in the world. It therefore did not follow that we ought to recognise it, merely because different powers in Europe had recognized the Republic of England under Oliver Cromwell. England at that time did not attempt to turn all the states of Christendom into republics; it did not wage war with sovereigns; it professed no principle of proselytism; and therefore, whatever neighbouring nations might have to expect at that time from her friendship, they had nothing to fear for the existence of Thrones. The same might be said of America. But France wanted to make proselytes to her opinions, and turn every Government in the world into a republic. If every Government was against her, it was because she had declared herself hostile to every Government. He knew of nothing to which this strange republic could be compared; but to the system of Mahomet, who with the Koran in one hand, and a sword in the other, held out the former to the acceptance of mankind, and with the latter compelled them to adopt it as their creed. The Koran which France held out, was the declaration of the Rights of Man, and universal fraternity; and with the sword she was determin-

ed to propagate her doctrines, and conquer those whom she could not convince. He by no means wished to hurry the nation into a war. He wanted to make the people see that France had really declared war against them, and that the two States might be considered as actually engaged in it. France had passed a variety of decrees, every one of which might fairly be considered as a declaration of war against every Government. She had resolved to wage an eternal war against Kings and kingly Government; and she had actually received Englishmen at the bar of the convention, whom, in contempt of the King and Parliament, she professed to consider as the representatives of the people of England. Was this no provocation? Was this no attack upon the Government of Great Britain? He entreated gentlemen, who were disposed to countenance new doctrines in England, to take warning by the fate of the virtuous Duke de la Rochefoucault. That nobleman, of ancient lineage, and princely fortune, who was adorned by every virtue, was seduced by the arts of Condorcet to countenance the revolution. He was vested with a high office of Magistracy, under the new constitution; and because he was not disposed to go all the lengths of the wicked men who found means to raise themselves to power, he was obliged to fly for his life; he was pursued, and, in the midst of his own tenants, who had experienced the bounty and munificence of his family, was forced from his carriage, from between his mother and his wife, and in their presence inhumanly butchered. To all the well-meaning advocates for new doctrines, he would hold up the bleeding head of the Duke de la Rochefoucault, whom all his virtues could not rescue from the hands of murderers, who feared neither God nor man.

“ Perish the heart that never learn'd to glow

“ At others good, or melt at others woe---”

Mr. Burke next touched upon Ireland. He said he was attached to that country, because it had given him birth; to England he was bound by the strongest ties of gratitude and love: and should so great a calamity ever happen as a dispute between the two countries, it was with the latter, which was the country of his adoption, that he would take part. But he feared no such event; the wisdom of the Parliament of Ireland would point out the necessity of freeing a great majority of that

kingdom from grievances under which they were made to labour, not only without any good to the country, but to its general detriment. In the province of Ulster, he said, the people were chiefly descendants of Scotch and English colonists; they were for the most part Protestants, it was true, but at the same time they were Dissenters. In two counties there they were superior in numbers to the Catholics; but in the other provinces, the latter were ten to one. Upon an average of the whole, the Catholics were at least four fifths of the nation. They were now come forward to demand, not an innovation in the constitution, but a restoration of it; the removal of an innovation. They called for a repeal of two acts of Parliament, one of which passed in the beginning of the late reign, which deprived them of the right of voting for Members of Parliament, which they had enjoyed up to that period; the other in the preceding reign, which deprived them of the right of serving upon juries. These people proceeded in the best possible way to their emancipation, by petitions, and by degrees; they did not ground their demands on the Rights of Man; if they did, he would certainly resist them; but simply on the right which they had, as citizens, to share in the blessings of the existing constitution of their country; and in that light their claims appeared so well founded, as to be in his mind irresistible.

Mr. FOX in explanation said, he was sorry again to trouble the House, but there were one or two things stated by the right honourable gentleman, which, whether they were meant to misrepresent what he had said or not, though he rather believed they proceeded from mistake, it was necessary for him to answer. It might seem from the right honourable gentleman's speech, that he had in his speech admired and applauded the French constitution as worthy of imitation, but that he never did; what he had said, and the House must have understood it so, was, that it was proper to negotiate with France; and even admitting that the constitution of that country was bad, still the arguments he had used would apply, and to treat with France would be a proper measure for this country to adopt. What the right honourable gentleman had said on that point, he must therefore consider as declamation, and proceeding from a wish to shew the powers of eloquence he pos-

fessed, for he could not believe it was meant to decry his doctrines, and render them unworthy the attention of the House. Much had been said of his love of republicanism; he was afraid that he had almost tired the House with guarding them against such a supposition as that he wished to see republicanism in this country. But the right honourable gentleman had gone a great length indeed, when he said that his proposing that a Minister should be sent from this country to France was a prelude to murdering the King of England. The right honourable gentleman must have been aware that he had often been accused of want of loyalty to his Sovereign, which had generally been at times when he had joined in the arguments and principles of the right honourable gentleman. It had likewise been said that a certain author was often quoted: it might be so, and it was because from the writings, speeches; and doctrines of that right honourable gentleman, he was ready to say that he had often met with such information and principles as he approved and wished to support.

Mr. BURKE explained.

Mr. YORKE rose immediately after Mr. Burke, and referred to his speech as conveying all his sentiments. He attacked the gentlemen who opposed the address, for not bending their opinions to those of the public, and said, that on that side, (the opposition side of the House) it seemed only to be necessary to go to be inspired with eloquence and talents, but that he did not find there either patriotism, moderation, or candour. He said he knew some of them, and respected them; that orators had great stakes in the country; but he professed he could not discover the motives of advantage to this country which could lead them to the line they took.

Mr. ADAM now rose, and said, that before he entered upon the great and momentous subject of debate then depending, rendered more momentous, if possible, by the manner in which Mr. Burke had treated it, from calling in aid the passions and prejudices of men to the subject of their deliberation, he was under the necessity of saying a few words in reply to something of a nature rather extraordinary, which had fallen from Mr. Yorke. That honourable gentleman, Mr. Adam said, had thrown out an imputation, accompanied with a compliment; the imputation, Mr. Adam said, was as groundless as the com-

pliment was just. He had said that a person only had to go to that side, (the opposition side of the House) to find the most brilliant eloquence and powerful talents. But he could not discern either patriotism, candour, or moderation. Mr. Adam said, that he had but to look round him, and he found eloquence never exceeded, and talents never surpassed in the history of the world. That whether the honourable and learned gentleman (Mr. Yorke) would come across the House to add to them, he could not tell, but this he could assure that honourable gentleman, that he (Mr. Adam) was determined not to pass across the House to look for any thing that could be found there! but above all, he was determined not to look there for candour, moderation, and patriotism. That every part of the conduct of those who had for years directed His Majesty's Councils, told him that those virtues were not to be found there, but they were to be found with those to whom the want of them had been imputed. If the learned gentleman meant by moderation a phlegmatic coldness for the interests of their country—by candour, a base suppression of their opinions—by patriotism, a cowardly disinclination to face unfounded clamour, he was ready to allow that his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox), who had all the qualities of understanding and integrity that could distinguish a man or a patriot, and his other friends round him, had neither candour, moderation, or patriotism. But if those words bore their original meaning, he would try their right to them with that of any public men in this or any country. He had the happiness to enjoy the confidence, affection, and friendship of his right honourable friend, Mr. Fox, and from the most intimate acquaintance, he could testify his motives to be as pure as his talents were exalted beyond those of other men. He said, that when he reflected on the vote of the preceding night, he saw in the character of that small minority enough to give him pleasure. The candour, moderation, and patriotism of the Bentincks, the Russells, and the Cavendishes. That he rejoiced to find these names united now, as they had been formerly, in defence of the constitution, calling for information before they voted approbation, and insuring to the country, by imitating the virtue and patriotism of their ancestors, the continuance of those blessings which their ancestors had bestowed.

Mr. Adam said, before he ventured to give his opinion, he must secure himself from misrepresentation, as it was almost sure to attach upon any one that gave the opinion he was going to give. It was supposed, by Mr. Burke, that disregard to property, looseness of morality, and every bad and vicious principle, was to be the consequence of this country negotiating with France. Mr. Adam said, he considered such an opinion as a libel upon the good sense and virtue of Englishmen. That he believed them to be too much attached to their constitution, and to that system of sound, just morality which had been long the established characteristic of this country, to run the risk of any such corruption. That they heard with horror, and shuddered at the events which crowded the present history of France. That the enjoyment of a free constitution gave them rights which were dear to them ; that besides it gave them the means of being taught and instructed, by men of talents, education, and virtue, in all the different public situations of life. The security of property, Mr. Adam said, he considered to be the safeguard of all morals, and of every duty and obligation in social and civil life. It protected the peasant in his cottage, as much as the prince in his palace ; it bound and tied together the different ranks of society, and secured liberty, while liberty, by reciprocally acting upon property, secured it. That it was the security which the selfish and ungenerous, as well as the benevolent and charitable, had in their property, which had been the great cause of humanizing mankind. It was that which excited the desire to excellence and pre-eminence ; which had built cities, cultivated lands, improved the arts, taught the sciences, and produced all the various blessings of civil life. When that was gone, (but in this country it never could be so) bankruptcy, ignorance, rapine, and insincerity would follow. Upon these principles, he desired to have it understood that nothing which he had to say could mean to unhinge that or any other legal or moral obligation. He said, that there was a new and most dangerous doctrine taught by Mr. Burke, that sentiment and passion, not safety and security, were to operate in national intercourse. Mr. Adam contended that the last only ought to be the consideration ; that the first consideration of a Government should be the safety of the State ; that that safety was secured by the information arising from

agents in foreign Courts, by negotiations to prevent foreign war, the greatest, and, next to civil war, of all human calamities. He said, that it was the bounden duty of the Governors to use every means to avert that evil, but above all, never to allow taste or passion to interfere with that important principle of national safety ; that upon this principle all wise nations had acted at all times ; that during the contest of the Red and White Roses, the King *de facto* in this country had been treated with, as well as those *de jure* ; that the Netherlands, when they threw off the yoke of Spain—the Seven United Provinces—Cromwell—had all been treated with. Why ? Because that assemblage of men called a nation, whoever or whatever administered their affairs, became dangerous to neighbouring nations ; and therefore the *de facto* governors were acknowledged, negotiations entered into, and wars averted, by the wise policy of considering the safety of the State as the supreme law ; not the passion, or violence, or indignation, or disgust which might actuate. That besides this, if all was done that could be done by negotiating, and nothing resulted, the whole nation would be satisfied, and with one heart and one voice would encounter their difficulties ; and by that bravery and spirit, the result of rational freedom, we should maintain the fame for which we had always stood conspicuous among the nations of the earth ; but that to rush wildly into a war, was what could never meet the approbation of any temperate or considerate set of men. Mr. Adam put these arguments in several different aspects, and then entered on some observations respecting the amendment of the night before. He said, amidst all the momentous and impending circumstances, there were some which had given him consolation ; the manly and glorious stand made against the torrent of exaggerated alarm by his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox) ; the universal expression of attachment to the constitution, proved the total falsehood of actual insurrection, which he asserted not merely upon the assertion, but upon the argument. For those who had stated it highest, had only said it was sufficient to satisfy the literal words of the Act of Parliament. Here he severely attacked Ministers for the alarm they had given ; he said, if they meant to assemble Parliament, they should have done it by an unusual exertion of prerogative, not by a measure that



must alarm. He then said, that upon the face of what had been stated, they could not justify what they had done. If the insurrection was at Dundee, should they have called out the militia in Kent? If at Salisbury, was the militia at Westmoreland the proper force? If at Yarmouth, the militia of Northumberland? If at Shields, that of Essex? He then shewed that none of those had amounted to such an insurrection as the law meant, and that they had all been over before the proclamation; and said, if the alarm was for an insurrection in the capital, it did not require a proclamation to call out the militia and assemble the Parliament, and thereby alarm the whole country, to enable them to assemble the regiments of horse round the capital. He adverted to the state of Scotland, and said it had been stated that country was in a state of fermentation and discontent. He said, in all countries there might be persons wild and extravagant in their ideas of government, but that was not the general disposition of Scotland. That they were a people loyal and attached to the constitution. That the love of liberty, which would attach them more and more to the constitution, was from a variety of obvious causes, increased wealth, increased intercourse with this country, an increase of ease and comfort in all the situations of life growing daily more and more; it might have excesses, but it had no crimes, and this truly British spirit only rendered his native country more and more dear to him. He said he was sure that every fermented spirit, if any such there were in that country, would be quieted by a judicious attention to those questions which were to come forward respecting the representation of Scotland, he hoped in the course of the present session. Here Mr. Adam took occasion to express his steady adherence to the general established system of representation of the 513 members of England; and stated that there were particular local circumstances which required consideration in Scotland. That the county representation of that country would come forward soon. That it would come under consideration in a regular legislative mode, not unhinging the fundamental principles of the representative system here. He said it should have his thorough attention, with a strong inclination to reduce it upon principles acknowledged in the Scotch law, so low, as to give a considerable body of men an interest in the choice of their representatives. That

as to the burghs, he said, it was a matter of much difficulty ; that their grievances should have a fair and candid hearing, and that he was sure the good sense of the people would be satisfied with such redress as was consistent with the treaty uniting them with this country, and as was founded on a proceeding not tending to shake the representative system by acknowledging fundamental defects in the constitution of the British Parliament.

Mr. Adam next adverted to that part of the King's speech which mentioned the proclamation of May. He said he did it merely to save himself from being included in the observation made of its utility. He wished not to rest upon it. It recalled to him difference of opinion with the friends he best loved in that and the other House of Parliament. He talked with great warmth of the affection and attachment of the present Earl of Guildford ; of the superiorly excellent qualities which his Lordship possessed, and of the display he had made in that House before his translation to the other House of Parliament ; and said, though they had somewhat differed in opinion upon that proclamation in May, there was every coincidence that friendship could desire upon the present subjects of discussion.

Mr. Adam now reverted to the particular question of the negociation. He said Mr. Burke had asked what hopes there were of success ? This, he said, he nor no man could tell : but it could as little be said that there would be none ; that if it did not make us successful in negociation, it would secure our success in war—it would unite every hand and every heart in that still serious but then inevitable calamity, while a conduct which carried half the nation to war with unwillingness would put a padlock on every sword, and unrudder every ship.

Lord CARYSFORT said, however he might differ from the amendment, still he was not averse to a reform. He thought that the spirit of commotion, which had lately possessed the People, was now happily subsided ; but the restless and ambitious disposition of France rendered it incumbent upon us to join our hearts and hands in vindicating the rights of Englishmen and of mankind. He reprobated the conduct of the armies of France, as they acted more like American buccaneers than like a civilised army. He would not attempt, he said, to enter into a discussion of the supposed grievances of

Scotland; but with respect to the political situation of Ireland, it was a subject of great moment, and deserved a few observations. Ireland was never backward in furnishing this country with men to fight their battles, whose loyalty was unimpeachable, and whose courage was invincible. It was capable of affording the greatest advantages to England, and therefore ought not to be neglected. He adverted to the claims of the Catholics. He declared himself averse to that bigotry which would preclude three millions of men, whose loyalty was indisputable, from voting for Members of Parliament. They had the same interests as the Protestants, and ought to have the same privileges.

Lord SHEFFIELD called him to order, assigning for reason, that as that subject would be discussed in another quarter, it could not be debated in that House, without interfering with the privileges of the Irish House of Commons.

The SPEAKER was of opinion, that the noble Lord alluded to a topic which had been introduced by other Members, and likewise interwoven with circumstances which had given rise to this debate.

Lord Carysfort went on. He stated, that as an hereditary Member of the Legislature of the sister kingdom, he had used due diligence to inquire into the sufferings of the Catholics of that kingdom, and he was convinced they were of sufficient notoriety to excite alarms, if they were not speedily redressed. He hoped and trusted that a measure so requisite to allay the popular ferment in that country, which was so intimately connected with this, would not be wholly neglected. He repeated his eulogium on the loyalty of Ireland, and was convinced if this kingdom was to declare war against France, that the Irish would, with their wonted zeal, support the war.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS found it his indispensable duty to animadvert on the topics which had been the subject matter of debate. In the first place, he wished it to be understood that the consideration of the Catholics in Ireland ought to be wholly omitted, as derogatory to the honour of the Irish Parliament, and the legal jurisdiction of that country. If the Government of that country conceived that the Catholics were entitled to the right of franchise, the Administration in this country could not, in his mind, interfere with their decision. He would,

therefore, confine himself to the two leading arguments which had been so forcibly urged against the Report on the Address by gentlemen whose prudence was much inferior to their abilities, namely, the impolicy of engaging in a war with France, and the imputation of tardiness to the confidential servants of the Crown for not having interfered at a former period. The right honourable Secretary asserted, that a coincidence of circumstances, which no human foresight could either foresee or prevent, had conspired to render our immediate interference absolutely necessary in supporting the honour and independence of Britain. The success of the French arms, and the sudden retreat of the Duke of Brunswick, afforded ample ground to apprehend that an attack was meditated on Holland. If England was to abandon the treaty with Holland, he argued, that she would be despised, and no nation consider her worthy of their confidence.

He next adverted to the speech of the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox), which had a manifest tendency to stimulate the enemies of this country to advance with gigantic strides to attack our unfortified places, and to realise those protestations which they had been so forward to make. The dispositions of the people in Scotland were not so inflamed as had been represented. By a return made to Sir John Sinclair from the clergymen of that country, who resided constantly in their parishes, it appeared they were loyal, contented, and happy. At the close of the last session an honourable Member (Mr. Sheridan) applied for leave to bring in a bill to reform certain abuses stated to exist in the representation of that country. After meeting with some opposition from him (Mr. Dundas), he used an expression to the following effect : — “ Let the right honourable Secretary beware of the most pointed disapprobation of his countrymen for the part he has taken in the debate against the reform.” He concluded by stating, that he was willing to meet Mr. Sheridan on any specific resolution with respect to the Scotch burghs.

The right honourable Secretary could not suffer the House to separate without testifying his reluctance to engage the country in the calamities of war ; and he was authorised to say, that if his right honourable friend had the honour of being returned to that House, he would convince the most obstinate that we

were not in that state of despondence some Members had represented. Our trade and manufactures were in a flourishing condition—our revenue and population daily increasing—and although we were under the necessity of suspending the blessings of peace, yet we would convince Europe we were ready to engage in a war, to vindicate our honour, and maintain our independence. Ireland was convinced of the propriety and advantage of preserving her connection with Great Britain; and he was also persuaded that France, from the poverty of Dumourier's chest, and the consequent expence of her army, which amounted to 400,000 men, could not think of combating the unanimity and resources of England.

Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan said a few words in explanation.

Mr. POWYS considered the political intentions declared by Mr. Fox to be peculiarly baneful to this country, and his amendment would have the effect, if passed, of alienating the people from the executive power. If the right honourable gentleman had a specific object, why not state it, and come to the question that night? If he wished for a negotiation with France, and a declaration of its being a republic, let him say so, and call for a vote; why not put that question instead of the amendment? To him negotiation with France appeared impossible; to whom was an ambassador to be sent? Who was sure that they who had proscribed your King would accept an ambassador from him? He approved of the speech and the address: they breathed nothing but the faithful preservation of our treaties abroad, and the security of our internal peace. If he had his wish, he would draw a line round France, to prevent the spreading of her infection—he would avoid meddling with her; but if she meddled with us, we had not a choice. The address had his hearty assent.

Mr. FOX said, what he meant was what he had stated—Peace, if it could be had consistently with the safety and honour of the Crown and Nation.

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, that he should take some other opportunity of delivering his opinion on the various important topics connected with the subject then before the House; but he could not suffer the debate to go off without saying a very few words, merely for the purpose of preventing his motives being mistaken in the vote he should give against the amend-

ment of the right honourable gentleman ; and he felt it the more necessary to do this, because he could by no means acquiesce in the language which had been held by many of the gentlemen with whom he should concur in the division, any more than he could disapprove of all that had been said on the other side. Gentlemen had talked as if it behoved all who wished for peace to vote for the amendment : he, for his part, should vote against it, not as being determined for war, but because he believed the amendment would by no means tend to peace. He would not then enter into particulars ; but he frankly declared, that as, at all times, war ought to be deprecated as the greatest of human evils, so there never was a period when it appeared more likely to be injurious to this country than the present. He could not feel the force of the arguments for war that might seem to have been suggested by what had been said concerning the distressed situation of the French, and the flourishing state of Great Britain. He preferred to the amendment the language of the address, which, concurring with the speech from the throne, plainly declared that the House of Commons approved of the neutrality His Majesty's Ministers had hitherto observed, and of their determination to avoid a war, if it were possible, consistently with justice. This, he fully trusted, would be the conduct of Administration. If we should find ourselves compelled by the obligations of solemn treaties to engage in war, as men of conscience and integrity we must submit to the necessity ; but nothing less than this necessity could justify the measure, and he begged it to be understood, that it was on this ground only that he felt it his duty to support Government in their present measures.

The amendment was negatived.

The report of the address was then read and agreed to.

The House adjourned.

*Saturday, 15th December.*

The SPEAKER, attended by many of the Members, proceeded to St. James's, to present the address of this House to His Majesty.

Mr. SPEAKER reported to the House, That the House attended His Majesty, this day, with their address ; to which His Majesty was pleased to give this most gracious answer :

Gentlemen,

*I return you my warmest thanks for this loyal and affectionate address; and I receive, with peculiar satisfaction, the assurances of your attachment to me, and of your determination zealously to concur in such measures as may be necessary for the security of these kingdoms, and for the faithful performance of our engagements.*

*Your public declaration of these sentiments cannot fail to produce the happiest effects in the present important conjuncture.*

Mr. FOX rose to make his promised motion. After having already said so much on this subject, and feeling how little anything he could add, was likely to be attended to in the present disposition of the House, he should only say a very few words in the way of previous explanation; indeed from the indisposition he laboured under, it was physically impossible for him to speak above a few minutes. By his motion he meant to imply no approbation of the conduct of the existing French Government, or of the proceedings that had led to the present state of things in France. He meant simply to declare, and record his opinion, that it was the true policy of every nation to treat with the existing Government of every other nation with which it had relative interests, without inquiring or regarding how that Government was constituted, or by what means those who exercised it came into power. This was not only the policy, but frequently the practice. If we objected to the existing form of Government in France, we had as strong objections to the form of Government at Algiers; yet at Algiers we had a Consul. If we abhorred the crimes committed in France, we equally abhorred the crimes committed in Morocco; yet to the Court of Morocco we had sent a Consul almost immediately after the commission of crimes at which humanity shuddered. By these acts we were neither supposed to approve of the form of Government at Algiers; nor of the crimes committed in Morocco. From his motion therefore, no opinion was to be implied, but the opinion he had stated. It would have been better if what he proposed had been done sooner, and there were circumstances that made it less proper now than at an earlier period. But this was not imputable to him. The earliest period was now the best; and this was the

earliest opportunity that the meeting of Parliament afforded him. It would have been still better, if our Minister had not been recalled from Paris, but continued there as the Ministers of some other Courts had done. He concluded with moving,

“ That an humble address be presented to His Majesty,  
 “ That His Majesty will be graciously pleased to give direction, that a Minister may be sent to Paris, to treat with those  
 “ persons who exercise provisionally the functions of Executive Government in France, touching such points as may  
 “ be in discussion, between His Majesty and his allies, and  
 “ the French nation.

Mr. GREY seconded the motion.

Lord SHEFFIELD said, it was impossible to be silent.—Are we then in that deplorable situation? Are we the vilest and most contemptible of nations? Are we to be the first to acknowledge, to cringe to these cut-throats and robbers, who have not the recommendation of being able to controul their own banditti? Are we to league with them, to act in concert with them? How soon they may be invited here, he should not then attempt to guess, or to say how soon our gaols may be filled with the most respectable persons in the nation, for the purpose of murdering them in cold blood, without a trial, or how soon the most amiable of our women, and of the highest ranks, may lie on straw, crowded in the most loathsome gaols, as in France, with the lowest dregs of the people, faultless, however, except perhaps that their fathers, husbands, or sons, may have ventured to maintain the constitution: he should leave to others more able than he was to detail the mischiefs of the monstrous proposition that had been made. He was too much agitated to attempt it. He was almost ashamed of the enthusiasm he had hitherto felt in favour of the right honourable mover. It is true he had made much inquiry; but he hoped other country gentlemen would communicate what they knew of the state of the country. In respect to war, he believed every man wished to avert it. That the surest means of avoiding it would be by vigorous preparation for it, and if it could not be avoided, that it would be better policy to meet it, than wait for it. That the disturbers of the world



when they had over run other nations, envying and dreading our prosperity, would not fail with double force to visit us.

His Lordship concluded with some observations on the late measures, and told the Ministers that although he commended their promptness and vigour, yet he could not approve their unjustifiable interpretation of the word insurrection, they would have done much better, if they had acknowledged that in consequence of some uncommon danger which impended, they had for the public good laid themselves under the necessity of applying to the Legislature for indemnity, but that he had not objected to the address, or supported the amendment, because he would not seem to countenance the many mischievous principles and suggestions which had been heard in that House the two last days from the mover of the amendment.

Mr. T. STANLEY (Member for Lancashire) said, he had attended to all that had fallen from the right honourable gentleman who made the motion, for the last three days, with the utmost astonishment. The motion of the right honourable gentleman had, in the two former debates, denied what was evident to the whole nation, to every man who would open his eyes. The minds of the people (he could speak of that part of the country from whence he came) had been poisoned by the arts of the seditious, and they had been kept within bounds only by that wisdom which had advised the late proclamations issued by His Majesty. But by such speeches as he had heard, every good effect would be destroyed; for nothing could so soon drive the kingdom into open insurrection, as the speeches and propositions of the right honourable gentleman and his friends. Already a cry had been excited against tithes, against taxes, and even against Monarchy itself. He dreaded the consequence. He had unfortunately been a spectator of the scenes in Paris on the boasted 10th of August, which had exhibited the most dreadful spectacles of bloodshed and horror; when neither age nor sex was spared, and when all was at the mercy of a murderous and savage banditti. He felt alarmed for this country, and deprecated what might follow from the speeches of the gentlemen on the other side of the House. He hoped the right honourable gentleman might be prevailed on to withdraw his motion; for if the distempered part of the people once under-

flood that there were men capable and ready to make and support such propositions, they would go into open insurrection, and shake the peace of the empire. He was sorry the motion had been made, because nobody could entertain a higher respect for the right honourable gentleman's judgement and abilities, or a stronger personal attachment to him, than he did ; but considering his duty to his country as the strongest of all attachments, he thought it necessary to say thus much.

Mr. M. A. TAYLOR, in support of the motion, declared, that he subscribed most heartily to every word that had fallen from his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox) for these last three days, and he was not afraid to go back to his constituents for their approbation of his conduct, notwithstanding every paltry and mean exertion that Government would make against him. He was as zealous as any other man in support of the constitution, by King, Lords, and Commons, but he was not an advocate for the maintenance of abuses. He was for a reasonable reform——

A call of " Order ! Order ! Question ! Question !" took place, when

The SPEAKER rose, and begged that the honourable gentleman would confine himself to the question, which was not relative to a reform.

Mr. TAYLOR said, that he was as much in order, and spoke as much to the question, as those gentlemen who had taken up the time of the House by reciting the dreadful events which happened in Paris, and which must be deplored by every man ; but the correction of the Speaker was sufficient, and he should submit. War, he said, was at all times a great and an heavy calamity ; but still greater, when it was meant to answer no one good purpose ; and it had already been admitted, that in a war with France, we had nothing to gain, and every thing to lose. Why then were gentlemen to be branded with opprobrious epithets, and to be held up to their country as its enemies, and as traitors, for endeavouring to avert the calamity ? He observed, with regard to the time, that if we did not negotiate now, we might wish to do it when it would not be in our power. The sense of the country had prevented the Russian war ; but, it was said, the sense of the country would be for a French war. Even, if it were, we should be obliged to

treat with them at last. The American war was long carried on with the sense of the country for it ; in the end we were obliged to acknowledge their independence. There was as much character, principle, and honour amongst the men with whom he acted, as any set of men could possess ; and if sedition or insurrection arose from speeches in that House, it would be from very alarming speeches from the other side of the House. He was a strenuous advocate for King, Lords, and Commons ; but he must say, that the recent mobs might be divided between loyal mobs, and mobs against individuals, such as those which had taken place at Birmingham, and were now to be seen at Manchester. He considered the motives of his right honourable friend in withing the proposition before the House to be entered on the journals, to be founded not only in wisdom, but in the future advantage of the country ; for the time might come, when the services of the right honourable gentleman might be necessary in the Cabinet, and his present conduct would render him the fittest, as he was the ablest man, to treat with the new Government of France.--- His right honourable friend's exertions appeared to him best calculated to serve and to save his country ; and for that reason he most heartily assented to the motion on the table.

Mr. LOVEDEN considered the motion to be an indirect attack on His Majesty's Ministers, and an improper interference in the exercise of the Executive Power. When domestic traitors acted in conjunction with foreign foes, a fact which all must see who were not wilfully blind, to be the case at present, it was time for every man, not to weaken, by such propositions as the present, the executive power of the country, but to stand forward in its determined maintenance and support. The motion therefore had his decided negative.

Mr. GREY said, that having seconded the motion of his right honourable friend, with whose sentiments on the subject he concurred in every point, he could not silently hear such motives imputed to himself and his friends, as a noble Lord had imputed ; nor suffer, unrepelled, the insinuation that they wished to excite insurrection. If the conduct of any set of men was calculated to excite insurrection, it was that of His Majesty's Ministers ; who, by proclamations, calumniating whole descriptions of men as seditious, and announcing in-

insurrections that never existed, filled the minds of the people with false alarms, and taught every man to distrust, if not to hate his neighbour. Accordingly, the only instances like insurrection that had occurred at Birmingham, and he was informed now at Manchester, were mobs, on pretext of loyalty and order, on pretext of supporting Church and King, but raised by wretches who knew as little of loyalty as they did of order, and directed solely against persons supposed inimical, not to His Majesty, but his Ministers. On this subject he should make a motion that very night if possible, for the purpose of putting all His Majesty's subjects equally under the protection of the civil Government. On the question before the House, it was asked if Great Britain was to sneak and crouch to France. No! neither sneak nor crouch, but negotiate like a great and high-spirited nation, and if redress was refused of any injury offered, then denounce war. We are asked again, would we treat now under all the circumstances we know to be existing. I say, yes certainly; for though I admit that the time is not the most favourable, the fault is not with us but with Ministers, who let the favourable opportunity pass away, and by their supine neglect lost an occasion of preventing many of the crimes committed in France, and perhaps of averting that act of injustice and impolicy (the execution of the King) which we now at this moment fear is committing. We are told by a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) that to treat with men stained with so many crimes as the present rulers of France would be disgraceful. Let, says he, the present guilty men pass away, and in the mean time let us fight a little. What disgrace is to be avoided, or honour to be acquired by fighting first, and then treating afterwards, which we know we must at last, I do not comprehend, nor how the object can be worth such a price. If a war the most dangerous ever undertaken, is to be avoided, we must treat now, and I support the motion as the only means left of averting so great a calamity. We are not here to be hurried away by our feelings, and our indignation against the perpetrators of the crimes committed in France. We are to decide on national policy, not personal feeling. I am for maintaining the national faith and the national honour; by whom have they been tarnished? Let Ministers answer the question. I will main-

tain our treaties with our allies, but first I will advise them to concede a point, if necessary, that it may be beneficial to concede. Let it be shewn that we are bound to keep the Scheldt shut for the Dutch, that they call upon us to do so, and will make no concession, for the point in itself I do not think of such importance as to justify a war; finally, that we have done all in our power to bring the French to an amicable arrangement, and then perhaps I will yield to a war, but still with reluctance. If, unhappily, we are brought into such a situation as that we can neither renounce our allies nor defend them, what has brought to this but the neglect or incapacity of Ministers? If we must have a war, it must be a war of vigour and exertion—not such a petty warfare as some gentlemen seem to think, and the Minister, in the speech from the Throne, would insinuate. If the enthusiasm of any man for the right honourable gentleman who made the motion be abated, mine, if possible is increased. The state of the country calls upon him to stand in the gap and defend the constitution; he has said he will do so; and while I have power of body or mind he shall not stand alone. A firm band of admiring friends, not the less respectable nor the less likely to prevail from the present disproportion of their number, will faithfully stand by him against all the calumnies of those who betray while they affect to defend the constitution.

The Honourable FREDERIC NORTH said, that it was very unpleasant for him to rise so soon after his admission into the House, more especially on a subject on which he was totally unprepared to speak; but as the honourable gentleman who spoke last (Mr. Grey) had declared that he had heard much declamation, and much eloquence, but not one argument against the motion of his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox) he hoped to be able to give him some argument against it, as he could not give him any eloquence, and wished not to give him any declamation. He had many serious objections to the motion. In the first place, he could not help thinking it unconstitutional. That a life of sickness and exile had indeed, almost from his infancy, separated him from his country; but from the little theoretical knowledge which he had of its Constitution, he had adopted the Bill of Rights as the symbol of his political faith. By that bill the whole federal power of the country re-

mained with the Crown: for the exercise of that power Ministers are responsible; for the abuse of it they are censurable. Now, by every principle of not only social but natural justice, no responsibility can be incurred where no arbitration is entrusted. When, therefore, the House of Commons thinks proper to advise His Majesty in so very delicate an exercise of his prerogative as the present, they virtually discharge his Ministers of their responsibility, and take it upon themselves. That if he did not disapprove of the general principle of the bill, he should highly disapprove of it in the present circumstances. That it seemed to him to be absurd in its nature to desire His Majesty to recognise a power which did not recognise itself; for the National Convention has always declared that not only the executive council is provisional, but that itself acted as a legislature only till the formation of the permanent constitution, which is not yet begun. Besides, what could be the advantage of treating with a power whose weakness was so notorious, (whatever it might agree to or stipulate with foreign countries) that it was universally supposed that it would not be able to protect the person of their late Sovereign (in whose deposition it had been maintained that we had no right to interfere) from the prison in which they had placed him to their own tribunal, to which they had called him as a criminal. But why send an ambassador to the National Convention? It has already received ambassadors from England: it had received them indeed from self-constituted societies and clubs of malecontents; but it had acknowledged them as the representatives of an oppressed people, whom it had promised to assist in the recovery of their liberty. Whether this was a time to recognise the French Government he left to the judgement of the House; but that, for his part, he thought it his duty to declare at that time his full and unqualified disapprobation of the motion.

Mr. FOX begged to set the House right respecting one point, which was, that nothing in his motion, or in any of his speeches, went to forming any alliance with France.

Colonel TARLETON professed a strong attachment to the Crown and the Constitution, but was determined carefully to watch the arbitrators of the executive government. If this country should unfortunately be plunged into war, he was

ready to use his utmost exertions in defence of his King and Country. However, he was so warmly impressed with a sense of his duty to his constituents, that he should feel much if that calamitous event could not be avoided. He enlarged upon the number of ships employed in our trade to different parts of the globe, and saw much danger, and nothing to be gained by war. The French colonies, if we had them, he considered as no acquisition. He lamented the scenes which had taken place in France, some of which he had seen. He was convinced that this country ought to negotiate rather than go to war; for whatever our finances might be at present, there was no saying how or when a war with France might end; and it could not be protracted without laying additional burdens on the People. He did not think Britain so deeply concerned in continental transactions as to be obliged to go to war, secured as she herself was in her insular situation — “*Penitus toto divisas orbe Britannos?*”

Mr. JENKINSON considered the present motion as a palpable encroachment on the executive power, in which was exclusively vested the prerogative of negotiating and making peace or war: therefore, till the Legislature, by new arrangements, should divest it of such power, that House could not interfere and give directions upon that subject. It was with some surprise that he heard such lamentable representations of the calamities of war come from the opposite side of the House, when he recollected that in the year 1787, when there was a prospect of hostilities on the same ground of quarrel between France and this country, the Minister was reprobated by them for pusillanimity, because he expressed his regret for the country's being involved in such a situation. Yet surely if there was no cause for despondency in a contest at that time, much less cause could there be now on comparing the situations of both countries. At that time France, though under a despotism, had a strong, vigorous, and efficient Government; whereas her Government now is all anarchy and confusion. At that time her revenues, though perhaps deranged, were still considerable, and ours at the same time were not extremely flourishing. At present the revenues of France were almost annihilated. By the estimate delivered in by their own Minister it appeared that their expenditure for the last three months

amounted to no less a sum than nineteen millions sterling, an enormous expence which no nation that has ever yet been heard of could possibly continue any length of time, and under which France, without treasure, without revenue, without commerce, without allies, without any resource whatever, must soon inevitably sink. The contrast between this condition and the state of our finances it was unnecessary for him to draw, but it was undoubtedly such as afforded the most encouraging prospect at the commencement of a war. At that time France was in alliance with the great powers of the Continent, and we were, in a great measure, unsupported. At present that state of things is entirely reversed. At that time we should have had Spain with a strong naval force against us; but at present, in all probability, we shall have Spain for our ally. In fine, so improved is the whole aspect of affairs in our favour, that if our success at that time was probable, it must be now inevitable.

He had heard it frequently urged in the course of these discussions that this period was particularly unfavourable to a war with France, on account of the number of discontented persons amongst us in correspondence with the seditions of that country, who menaced and endangered our Government and Constitution. That there was a small party entertaining such designs he had very little doubt of; and from their great activity he also considered them as dangerous; but he confessed that this very circumstance, so far from deterring him from war, became a kind of inducement. They may be troublesome in time of peace—they may be tranquil in time of war; for as soon as hostilities were commenced, their correspondence with the French must cease, and all the resource they had would be to emigrate into that country, which would be a good thing for this, or remaining where they are, to conduct themselves like good citizens, as that correspondence which in law is not punishable now would in time of war be treason.

He had on a former occasion remarked, that we may always infer France as our natural enemy and rival, whether its Government were despotic or free; with this difference, that, under a despotism, we should be more liable to wars from intrigue; but under a good and free government, very different indeed from the present, though we should be less subject to



wars, whenever they did happen, they would be more formidable. In the same way he held it to be true with respect to ambition. The ambition of a monarch was no farther formidable than as it was supported by the power of the people; but when a whole people, and those powerful, were ambitious, as was now the case in France, the alarm became serious, and the consequences may be dreadful. In every point of view in which the subject could be regarded, it concerned the independence and existence of this country to exert itself strenuously in opposing the progress of the French arms. It was natural enough that we should look on without taking any active part, if not with indifference at the progress of the combined armies in the invasion of France, for the Emperor and King of Prussia being military, and not naval powers, we could be no sufferers by any acquisitions they might make. Far different were our interests when referred to France — a mighty naval power, our constant rival and inveterate enemy. Not content with the vast range of coast which she already possesses, sufficient for the most extensive commerce, no sooner does she stretch along in the career of conquest but she proceeds to open the navigation of the Scheldt, in defiance of every guarantee and all subsisting treaties. It was a rule universally admitted, that where a state possessed both banks of a river, that river belonged to it exclusively as far as the territory extended. But if the different banks belonged to different powers, then indeed the navigation of the river was in common between them. Of the river Danube, both banks, for a considerable space, belong to the Emperor, and both banks, for another space, to the Porte, and each power retains the navigation of its own share exclusively. So with Holland, they had possession of both banks of the Scheldt at the mouth, the exclusive navigation of which belonged to them of course, and was secured and preserved to them by a variety of treaties. The late conduct of the French, therefore, was a most daring infraction of stipulations, which they were bound by justice and by the law of nations to respect. They knew that we were engaged to protect Holland in this navigation: they also knew that we interfered some time since, by arms, to fulfil our guarantee, and the insolent provocation now offered could not

be mistaken, nor could it be overlooked but with a foul imputation of cowardice.

The incredible success which the French had experienced in the latter part of the campaign rendered them less cautious to conceal their views of universal empire. The King of Sardinia did not by any overt act accede to the confederacy formed against France, and should therefore have been respected as a neutral power. They had, however, collected an army on his frontier, as soon as they heard that the question of making war upon them was debated in his council; though it was carried in the negative, they did not hesitate to throw off the mask, and immediately ordered General Montesquieu to invade the country of Savoy. They did indeed make a pretence that the King entertained several emigrants, some of them his own relations; but surely if he did, it was done in common with every other country in Europe. Having accomplished the conquest of Savoy, they advanced to the walls of Geneva, the inhabitants of which, terrified at their approach, called in to their assistance a garrison of Swiss from the neighbouring canton of Berne, as they were authorised to do by treaty. Hereupon the French, in violation of the laws of nations, demanded that the Swiss should evacuate the city; and what was still more outrageous, that the magistrates who called them in should be punished. This conduct he represented very forcibly to be such a flagrant interference in the internal government of a neutral and independent state, as must silence the complaints of France that other powers should interfere in hers.

Ministers had been loudly censured for not having interposed sooner by negotiation, if they approved that mode; or if they preferred arms, it was asked why they had not recourse to them before France had so far extended its conquests? To this he would reply, that England professed and observed the strictest neutrality through the war, till the French violated the rights of other nations, and came at last to insult and even invade our allies. The boast of Dumourier, that he would spend his winter in Brussels, was very generally known, and as generally laughed at. That Great Britain did not act in consequence of what was considered then as a gasconade, was only a proof of her moderation; but it would be carrying that moderation too far, if she did not act at all. They had also in-

curring reproach for not having been industrious at an early period to conciliate the good will and friendship of France. But where persons and things were every day changing, where all rule belonged to robbers and assassins, in what quarter were they to apply? What Government should they acknowledge where there was no Government? How could England recognise a Constitution which the French themselves were every day violating, and which is now no longer in existence? But, thank God! England, so long distinguished for her faithful and sacred adherence to her treaties, would not forego her respectable and useful alliances for any new allies whatever, and least of all surely for such allies.

He came now to the question of the time when this embassy was proposed. In the note addressed by the Secretary of State to Lord Gower, when he was about to leave Paris, His Majesty, in his friendship and brotherly affection for the Most Christian King, was pleased to demand of the National Convention that the persons of the Royal Family should be respected. When the life of Louis XVI. was apprehended to be in danger, and an application was made by the Ministers of the Emperor and the King of Naples, His Majesty was pleased to declare, that if the person of the French King was violated, the persons guilty of so atrocious an offence should find no asylum in any part of his dominions. "On this very day," said he, "while we are here debating about sending an ambassador to the French Republic, on this very day was the King to receive sentence, and in all probability it is the day of his murder! What is it then that gentlemen would propose to their Sovereign? to bow his neck to a band of sanguinary ruffians, and address an ambassador to a set of murderous regicides, whose hands were still reeking with the blood of a slaughtered monarch, and who he had previously declared should find no refuge in his dominions. No, Sir, the British character is too noble to run a race for infamy; nor shall we be the first to compliment a set of monsters, who, while we are agitating this subject, are probably bearing through the streets of Paris, horrid spectacle! the bloody victim of their fury."

Having exposed the indecency and disgrace of such a submission, he also remarked on the impropriety of giving a sort

of oblique confirmation of the justness of their principles; in the democratic appearance it would have, that the House of Commons should recognize them as friends, though the King disowned them. He then concluded with urging again the necessity of arresting the career of the French, who were not content with the ordinary mode of conquest, but wherever they planted their tree of liberty, were also planting dangerous principles, subversive of order, of morality, and religion; and he reminded the House, that it was easy to create opinions, but extremely difficult to revive them.

Mr. FRANCIS said, he could assure the House most solemnly, and most truly, that when he came down to the House, he had no thoughts of taking any part in the debate, and that nothing but the instant urgency of the occasion, and the extraordinary language which he had heard this day, could have compelled him to request their attention even for a few minutes. That he was neither prepared nor desirous to enter at large into the question. But, to declare his sentiments, and to deliver his opinion shortly and distinctly, was now made unavoidable. It was forced upon him, not only by his public duty, but by the strongest considerations of personal interest, by which every honest man is bound to vindicate his honour, his principles, and his character. I must begin with remonstrating and protesting against the style and tone with which this debate has been and is conducted. We are, or we pretend to be, a deliberative Assembly. We are debating upon a subject of the most grave, the most serious, the most solemn deliberation; that is, whether this nation shall, or shall not, be exposed to the hazards, and involved in the calamities of war. But in what manner has this awful question been agitated? Is it by appeals to our understanding? No, Sir, the understanding has never once been appealed to. It is by exciting our passions, it is by agitating our feelings, and by presenting perpetually to our imagination such scenes of horror, as the human mind can hardly endure to contemplate. These are the means, and the only means, which gentlemen have taken to enlighten and to direct our judgement. I confess their end is answered. The effect does certainly correspond with the cause. The House naturally catches the flame, partakes in the furious passions of the persons who address them, and

instead of discussing the great question of war and peace with temper, with a cool and careful consideration of arguments, without which there can be no wisdom either in the debate or the decision; instead of this, they in fact deprive themselves of all capacity to debate, of all faculty of judging; they listen with rapture to mere invectives, and echo them back again with shouts, with cries, and with clamours, renouncing and proscribing all liberty of opinion, all freedom of debate. Is this a British House of Commons, or am I suddenly transplanted by some enchantment into that Convention, against which the perpetual theme of reproach is, that they deliberate in passion, and resolve by acclamation? Sir, it was not necessary for these honourable gentlemen to revive and paint to you, as they perpetually do, the scenes of horror, which have been acted at Paris. They are much mistaken if they think that I do not view those execrable acts with as much detestation as they do. But it is my duty and my endeavour at this moment to turn my thoughts from them, as much as possible, in order to keep my mind in a state of freedom, and in a capacity to judge and to pronounce upon the greatest of all national interests, which not only demands all the understanding I possess, but the free and unbiassed use of it. On such a question, Sir, I cannot indeed exclude the feelings of the heart; but it is the head that should deliberate, it is the judgement that should decide. Is there a question before us, or is there not? Am I free, am I safe in debating it? If I hesitate, if I balance between war and peace, if I deliberate before I pronounce, is my integrity to be instantly disputed, is my loyalty to be suspected? Sir, I am not fond of making voluntary professions. I know how little they prove, and how little they are to be depended on. But the occasion comes before me unfought for, when it is not a forward and officious profession to declare, that in personal duty and affection to the King I yield to no man, and that, neither in this House, nor in the kingdom, has His Majesty a more loyal subject than I am. The day of trial may come. Necessity irresistible may force us into a war. When that necessity comes, I will meet it and encounter it like a man, and as readily perhaps as others, who talk more than I do, at the hazard of my fortune and life. But before that unhappy hour shall come, I have another intermediate duty to perform: to assist

in preventing a war, if it be possible. A barren duty, I fear it will be. Whatever some gentlemen may think or affirm, we are not yet in a state of war. If we were, there would be no question before us, but how to support it. We should not have voted the address we have done. We should not have thanked His Majesty for the "strict neutrality which he has carefully observed," and from which he has not departed, much less for the gracious assurance he has given us of his hopes of "preserving the blessings of peace, by a firm and "temperate conduct, and that nothing shall be neglected on "his part that can contribute to that important object." If so, the object is not only important, but still within our reach. Is it a crime, then, am I instantly criminal, is my loyalty to be suspected, if, to the best of my judgement, I concur in the sentiments declared by His Majesty, if I co-operate with his gracious intentions, and, to the utmost of my power, in securing the same objects, in preserving the blessings of peace? If this be a crime, you must charge it upon the King's Ministers, who advise His Majesty to hold such language to Parliament; to consider the preservation of peace as a blessing, when in fact it is a curse, and to delude the nation with the hopes of preserving that peace which cannot be preserved; because it does not exist; because, in fact, we are in a war, while His Majesty tells us just the contrary, and while we thank him for telling us so. But now, Sir, in the name of God, how is peace to be preserved, if you will take no one pacific step to preserve it? I defy you to reconcile the language of these gentlemen with that of His Majesty, or with your own address.—We are told by an honourable gentleman, who seems to be in the secret; he confesses, he affirms, that in this war there is little to be gained, and a great deal to be lost. I agree with him entirely as far as he goes; but I go much farther. I say and affirm, that in this war there is nothing to be gained, and every thing to be lost. The great parties which have engaged in it already, are all of them disgraced, if not ruined by it.—Will it mend the matter to add our ruin and disgrace to theirs? Shall we save that life, the loss of which I shall lament and deplore as much as any man? Shall we reinstate the House of Bourbon? Shall we prevent the invasion, possibly the conquest, of Holland? By war, impossible, whatever the success of it

may be. But we are engaged by treaties. Agreed. But do those treaties forbid all preliminary negotiation? And if they did, is any nation bound to its own destruction? Are treaties ever executed, are they ever regarded, when they manifestly lead to that issue? But shew me at least how, and by what means these treaties are to be executed? Is it sufficient to declare war, whether you have a rational prospect or not? In what quarter is France essentially vulnerable by the power of this kingdom? I know it not: but if I did, the knowledge and certainty of my power should not make me the less cautious in what manner and for what purposes I made use of it. Sir, all I contend for is, that these serious questions may be seriously considered. We are as much bound to debate and deliberate now, as we may be hereafter to act with vigour and decision. They are only different branches of the same general duty which we owe to the King and to the country. Precipitation is not the foundation of firmness. Immediate passion is no security for future perseverance. The time may come, when I must yield to necessity, when deliberation must be at an end, and action must begin. I will then take my share in it. Till that time, my proper office is deliberative and pacific, and I will perform it in spite of clamour, in defiance of obloquy. I will do the invidious duty now. I will do the honourable duty then.

Mr. ERSKINE said, he had been so much accustomed to hear the interests of men defended upon the principles of reason instead of passion, in another place, that he was under much difficulty where he found declamation substituted for argument. He begged to be understood not to give any opinion at all concerning the constitution of France, and that he meant not to mix the affairs of France with the affairs of this country. He thought that gentlemen who call themselves so often the friends of our constitution, might give credit to the sincerity of this declaration, as well as to the sincerity of the declaration of his right honourable friend who made this motion; but no sooner had he made the motion, than a noble Lord started up, and in a tone of the most violent passion reprobated both the motion and the motive from which it proceeded. He did not wish to impute any shameful excess to the noble Lord; but he thought that if he was ashamed of the enthusiasm he had for-

merly felt in favour of his right honourable friend, which he had so often recommended to others, and acted upon himself so well, he ought to be ashamed of the enthusiasm he had betrayed on the present occasion. If his right honourable friend, Mr. Fox, was an enemy to the constitution, it was high time to desert him; but from what he had always said, what he had always done, there was the best reasons for looking on him as its firmest friend. What colour then was there for an attack upon his right honourable friend? He conceived that on the first day of the session, the House understood that we are not at war with France, and that whether we are to get into that calamitous situation, depended upon contingency.—He conceived it to be an evil which prudence might avert, which reason taught us to avert, if possible. What did his right honourable friend propose? Did he, when he advised the King to treat by the medium of an Ambassador, put into the mouth of that Ambassador any thing that would degrade this country, or interfere with its true interests? No. He meant only that we shall have a man on the spot, clothed with the character of an Ambassador, that we might be in a situation to treat with France, as we should with any other power. But it had been observed, that it would be nugatory, in this condition of things, to send an Ambassador to France on the advice of that House, unless they also advised the King as to the instructions to be given to that Ambassador. He confessed he thought otherwise; and that this, like every other embassy, should be under the immediate direction of His Majesty. But France, it seemed, was in a situation too degraded for us to treat with her. He had hitherto said nothing on the affairs of France, and should still observe the same rule; but the question now amounted to this, whether we are pleased to say we will go to war with France at all events? For that was the effect of treating France with contempt? If war was inevitable, we must boldly meet it; but where was that war to end? Were we resolved not to terminate it until the French had, in our opinion, formed a Government of moderation and of justice; or, perhaps what they never would have, a Government equal to our own? Until all or some of these things were to happen, we were to carry on a ruinous war, and be plunged into the misery and horror that await a war, merely because we



cannot upon a nice punctilio think it proper to send a person to France, to represent the dignity of this country; and the evil was incurable, for the reason which prevented us now from sending an Ambassador to France might prevent our bringing the war, when we should think it necessary, to a determination. He was as unwilling to see intemperate doctrines maintained in this country as any person could be, but he did not fear it, for he was persuaded of the good sense of the people of this country, and that they would not be easily diverted from the point of their true interest—their interest in the constitution. He observed that it had of late become so much the fashion for gentlemen to rehearse their political creed, that he among the rest, must say he loved the British constitution, and had as much reason to wish it preserved inviolate as any man in this country; but the question was, whether we were at this moment to dash into a war upon a petty punctilio of office? What had we to fear from sending an Ambassador to France? That his principles might be contaminated? That he might be afflicted with the French mania? The plague of the mind was not like the plague of the body. The French constitution could not be brought over in a bag of wool. Did we ever before this refuse to send an Ambassador to any country on account of the form of its constitution? Did we inquire into the constitution of Morocco when we sent our Ambassador there? Or did we object to treat with that people on account of their religion? Indeed, it seemed to him politic that we should not be very squeamish upon these things. But he was told, that we are in a situation much more convenient to go to war with France, than on any former occasion: upon the spirit of the people of this country, he had a firm reliance; they would fight against the enemies of their country, he had no doubt; but then the more we know of their courage and their virtue, the more we ought to endeavour to spare their efforts, as well for them as for ourselves, for neither could benefit by war; it was a scourge to the human race; it was well described by a man, who, if not possessed of the first, had nevertheless a respectable degree of eloquence, he meant the late Doctor Johnson, who thus spoke of war.

“ It is wonderful with what coolness and indifference the greater part of mankind see war commenced. Those that

“ hear of it at a distance, or read of it in books, but have never presented its evils to their minds, consider it as little more than a splendid game, a proclamation, an army, a battle, a triumph. Some indeed must perish in the most successful field, but they die upon the bed of honour, resign their lives amidst the joys of conquest, and filled with England's glory, smile in death.” “ Such,” said Mr. Erskine, “ I am confident will be the death of every Briton, who, if we are forced into a war, shall fall in battle for the honour, the safety, the constitution and the freedom of his country, but let us see the other side of the picture.

“ The life of a modern soldier is ill represented by heroic fiction. War has means of destruction more formidable than the cannon and the sword. Of the thousands and ten thousands that perished in our late contests with France and Spain, a very small part ever felt the stroke of an enemy; the rest languished in tents, and ships, amidst damps and putrefaction; pale, torpid, spiritless, and helpless; gasping and groaning, unpitied among men, made obdurate by long continuance of hopeless misery; and were at last whelmed in pits, or heaved into the ocean, without the least pity, without notice, without remembrance. By incommodious encampments and unwholesome stations, where courage is useless, and enterprize impracticable, fleets are silently dispeopled, and armies sluggishly melted away.” “ Such,” added Mr. Erskine, “ are the inevitable evils to which we expose the best and bravest of our fellow subjects by war. What then are the advantages we reap from it, even when the termination is most prosperous; and who are they that reap the profit—who are ready on all occasions to raise the voice of acclamation when war is proposed?

“ Thus is a people gradually exhausted, for the most part, with little effect. The wars of civilised nations make very slow changes in the system of empire. The public perceives scarcely any alteration but an increase of debt; and the few individuals who are benefitted, are not supposed to have the clearest right to their advantages. If he that shared the danger enjoyed the profit, and after bleeding in the battle grew rich by the victory, he might shew his gains without envy. But at the conclusion of a ten-years war, how are

“ we recompensed for the death of multitudes and the expence  
“ of millions, but by contemplating the sudden glories of pay-  
“ masters and agents, contractors and commissaries, whose  
“ equipages shine like meteors, and whose palaces rise like  
“ exhalations?

“ These are the men who, without virtue, labour, or haz-  
“ ard, are growing rich as their country is impoverished;  
“ they rejoice when obstinacy or ambition adds another year  
“ to slaughter, and devastation; and laugh from their desks at  
“ bravery and science, while they are adding figure to figure,  
“ and cypher to cypher, hoping for a new contract from a  
“ new armament, and computing the profits of a siege or  
“ tempest.”

“ These,” said Mr. Erskine, “ are the men, I know they  
“ are, who dwell in palaces rather than common habitations,  
“ who revel in luxury and riot; who, without virtue, indus-  
“ try, or courage, derive a splendid revenue from the ruin of  
“ their country; who look upon every new contract as an  
“ estate, for which they would sacrifice one half of their spe-  
“ cies; and when the toils of battle are over, proudly despise  
“ the very men by whose labours they became rich. I will  
“ not consent to the ruin of my country by war, to oblige  
“ such characters. I say, you should deliberate again and  
“ again, before you go to war.” He would not attack the  
right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) who was not yet re-  
turned to that House; but he had asserted in the King’s speech,  
and the House had agreed to the truth of it, in their address,  
that the surplus, as it was called, would be sufficient to carry  
on the war without a fresh imposition of taxes. Did they  
really mean to say that such a miserable pittance was sufficient  
to carry on the war, and that too at a time when we were  
hardly able to make the revenue meet the various claims upon  
it? What sort of a war was it to be that was thus to be sup-  
ported, and that against a people who were described (but he  
did not join in that description) as having become savage be-  
yond all reason, who have no sense of justice or humanity,  
and are aiming at universal dominion? But it seemed that his  
right honourable friend (Mr. Fox) was a dangerous man to  
his country at the present moment from the opinions he held;  
and a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) must let loose

all the virulence of invective against him, because after agreeing so long, they now happened to differ. He could never forget the services of that right honourable gentleman, from whose writings he had learned much of the general principles of freedom, and much of those principles as modified by the British constitution. But at the time those writings were published, the right honourable gentleman and his opinions were treated with as much asperity in that House, as the opinions now held by his right honourable friend, and those who supported them. From the recollection of what is passed, let us learn to bear with one another, and not impute bad motives to those who differ from us. As to my right honourable friend, I believe him to be a man born for great events, with a mighty mind to comprehend, and commanding eloquence to point out the true interests, joined to a temper most extraordinarily suited to give to these great qualities their due effect—formed by the blessing of Providence to guard, to invigorate, to save from ruin our constitution, and to remedy the vices of the times. He has said that he will stand in the gap to preserve our constitution; men of characters as irreproachable as their talents are eminent, have said they will stand with him, and can we have better security? He observed it had of late become a prerogative in the House to treat gentlemen rather as conspirators than Members of the House of Commons, if, speaking of the French, they did not rail against them with all the virulence of invective; and they were treated in the same way if they spoke of our Government, and did not praise it in the most exaggerated terms. They were placed, as it were, in the situation of a criminal, who had to answer for an offence rather than deliver an opinion. But to return to the question—We were to go to war, and the country was ready, in many parts, it was said, to fall into a state of insurrection. If so, all he could say was, that we ought to take great care that we did not needlessly add to the public burdens, because it would add to the public discontent. The next question was, when was the war to be concluded; that was, at the accomplishment of what point? for there was nothing specified in that respect. If no limitation could be given, those who voted for a war voted for that to which there was no termination. Influenced by these considerations, and conceiving that the

motion of his right honourable friend tended to avert a war, he gave it his most cordial assent.

The MASTER OF THE ROLLS was astonished to hear so much declamation on the miseries of war from the supporters of this motion, as if they alone were sensible to its calamities. He assured them, that he and those with whom he acted, loved war as little as they did ; but they could not decline it, when their interest and honour, as a nation, and their character, as faithful allies, demanded it of them. France certainly had, since the Duke of Brunswick's retreat, obtained very surprising advantages ; in consequence of which, they were now spoken of as a nation and government perfectly established. His opinion was very different ; for he was of opinion, that the allies would still succeed, the French conquests be re-taken, and their motley government be overturned.

With regard to sending them an Ambassador, he would cut the matter short, by asking the right honourable gentleman this plain question—Would you go ?—He would put the same question to all the other gentlemen, and was apprehensive that not one would take the office, and expose his life amongst those ferocious savages. The Convention, in fact, had received Ambassadors already, in the persons of two fellows, calling themselves the Representatives of the People of Great Britain, viz. Frost and Barlow. Then, if an Ambassador came to their bar with credentials from the King of Great Britain, it was more than probable that he would be dismissed with ignominy and insult. They would ask him, “ Do you come from the King or the People ? We have the British Ambassadors already, and we have vowed an enmity to all Kings—Be gone ! ” He would not consent to expose his country to such an humiliation, even if he had no other reasons for refusing his assent to the motion : as to send an Ambassador at the present moment, he should consider as to sue for peace.

Mr. WINDHAM acknowledged, that when any measure proceeded from Mr. Fox, it was not without the greatest anxiety that he refused his assent to it. What the judgement of his right honourable friend was, every one knew ; how pure his motives, how eminent his integrity, it would be as impertinent in him to explain, as it would be in any one to waste the time of the House in discussing positions that were acknowledged by

all mankind. However wide, therefore, the difference that subsisted between his right honourable friend and him, he was persuaded that it was only that species of difference which exists between two persons, beholding the same object from two distinct points of view. He was persuaded that it was not a difference that extended to principle. Having paid this just tribute to Mr. Fox, he hoped that he should not appear to have been bribed to it, by the partial compliments he had received from his right honourable friend ; he hoped that it would be seen to be the genuine result of conviction ; the unbiassed testimony of experience.

He agreed with Mr. Fox in his statement, that this was merely a measure of expediency that did not implicate the conduct or the government of France. He acceded not only to this position, but to his right honourable friend's assertion, that necessity often dictated to one country a recognition of the power of another. Having made a concession to this extent, he contended that those who argued against a recognition of the Republic of France, were fortified not only by experience, but by higher principles, by the interests of nations, and by the dictates of humanity. Thus " thrice armed," very powerful arguments indeed ought to be used, more powerful than any that had been used, to induce the House to assent to the motion of his right honourable friend ; for by recognizing the Republic of France, what consequences would Great Britain produce ? The complete alienation of those powers with whom she was at present allied ; not only the alienation of allies, but by giving the whole weight of her character to France, she would place all the rest of Europe in a situation deplorable indeed ; she would arm every subject, of every kingdom, against the powers that governed those kingdoms ; she would produce consequences as fatal to the future interests of the world, and as much to be lamented, as the retreat of the combined armies from France, which he looked upon to be the most fatal event that had ever happened.

If he were to be asked, whether he would submit to an evil, or wait for a necessity, he was not quite sure that he would not wait for compulsion, and take that for his justification. That Great Britain should be the first country to be less shocked with massacre and murder ! That she should be the first country to

evinced a want of feeling, filled him with anguish, and with horror! That she should be the first to preclude herself from forming a part of the confederation, was disgraceful! If submission to France must be the consequence, necessity should first justify that submission. Well did the House know, that no inquiry could be made into the origin of Governments; the greater the space of time, therefore, that elapsed from that origin, the smaller was the crime incurred. Evils, by mere time, become less; by time the Government of France might become less shocking, and less wicked.

After all, he confessed he had not heard what advantages were to result from a recognition of the Republic of France. All that he had heard was, that the effect of negotiation might dispose France to such measures as would prevent the necessity of war; but, good God! what method could be more dishonourable than this! what proposition could confer more shame upon the country!

With respect to the temper and feelings of the people, he acknowledged that they ought, on all occasions, to be consulted. This was proper, because the public judgement was the great rule of right and wrong. Every free Government would act on this position; but if by the feelings of the people it was meant, that the necessity of a war, or the necessity of peace, should be determined by the first impression of the Public, no impression would be found to be more false. It was contrary to the scheme of the Constitution, which had placed the determination of this necessity, not in the Public at large, but in a source the farthest removed from the people—in the Crown; for war generally depended on a series of facts that could not be publicly known. War could never be adopted but on remote principles. Were the people, therefore, he would ask, possessed of such capabilities, as were absolutely necessary for the discussion of such questions? Clearly not. This remark he had judged it necessary to make, because a position had been much circulated, that in transactions of this nature, the Government of the country was not to be considered.

These sentiments, inadequate as they were to the magnitude of the question, the suggestion of which perhaps he lamented, determined him to give his vote against the proposition for sending an Ambassador to the French Republic.

Mr. WHITBREAD said, it was the right of the people to know the opinion of their representatives, and it was the right of each Member of that House to express his opinion candidly and impartially. The abilities and integrity of the right honourable gentleman who spoke last he never doubted, but, however great his respect, he would not pay so great a deference to them as to give up his opinion upon the present subject. He had stated in effect that which alarmed him very much to hear "that Great Britain was in a confederacy against the French. [Here there was a vehement cry of "No! No! No!"—] "He must know better than I," said Mr. Whitbread, "whether he did or did not say so, but "I am impressed with that idea." Many gentlemen argued as if the question upon this motion was, whether we shall have peace or war with France? His right honourable friend by that motion had not claimed the right of going to war with France at all, nor had he insisted upon avoiding it; all he said was, that we should try the event of a negotiation first, and if afterwards it was found we could not do without a war, he would assist Government, and so he hoped they would all, with their fortunes and their lives. But it had been said, that it would be a reproach to this country to negotiate with France: we said to the French, "Shall we negotiate with you?"—No! "You are a parcel of ruffians and assassins."—Mr. Whitbread observed, that he was not standing up in defence of assassins, but he was standing up in defence of his country. The honourable gentleman who spoke last, had said, it would be a degradation for us to negotiate with the French at present. That the time might come, when necessity might compel us. What then did we say to the French by this? "You are a parcel of assassins; but if you assassins compel us, we must negotiate with you." Thus our confessing we negotiated by necessity on our side, would, according to the disposition we were pleased to give to the French, justify any act on theirs. We shall have given to a malicious disposition the highest possible provocation, and must bear the effect. In all the points in which he could view that observation, "that we should not treat with the French until necessity compelled us," it appeared to him to be the most futile he ever heard. Another thing had been stated, which he did



not believe to be true, to the extent it had been asserted, that the French Republic was not acknowledged any where. He believed this assertion was too general, for that the French Republic had been acknowledged.

A learned gentleman (the Master of the Rolls) had asked, who would go Ambassador to France? He believed that no man, who had any regard for the interest of his country, would refuse to go. There were Ambassadors from several parts of Europe now at Paris, not indeed sent there since the deposition of the King, but who having been there before, had remained; they might not have instructions from their different Courts to acknowledge the French Republic, but they were there. Sweden had an Ambassador there, and so, he believed, had our good ally the Dutch. The heads of these men were still upon their shoulders, and he saw no danger to the British Minister, had he staid there after the dethronement of the Monarch. As to the cause for which we were going to war, it was asked for what purpose, and to whom Mr. Erskine applied his quotation? The answer was obvious; he applied it to all those who talked of war with the French Republic in a tone of acclamation.—For what were we going to war? For the exclusive navigation of the Scheldt. This seemed to him to be very unnatural; for he believed the course of rivers to belong to all the countries through which they flow, at least God and Nature directed it so; but perhaps some men might know better. What objection had we to a negociation, as allies of the Dutch? They had opened a negociation for themselves; they suffered French vessels to go up the Scheldt, only entering in a protest, in order to have the matter afterwards discussed. But it was said, that if a negociation on our part was to be agreed on, we should not know with whom we were going to negotiate; then we did not know with whom we were going to war. But all these objections were sophistical; for he knew there existed a provisional executive Council in France, with whom any Court might treat; and his right honourable friend had pointed that out clearly in his motion, and by a negociation with that Council we might save this country from a ruinous war. But we were told, that this interfered with the executive Government of the nation. Then the question was resolved to this, “Has or has not this House a right to advise the Crown?” Could there be

two opinions upon that question? It was not only their right, but it was also their duty, to advise the Crown in cases of importance to the interest of the country. He then took notice of the various reports of insurrections in different parts of the kingdom, stated by Mr. Dundas, but which appeared to be unfounded; there was said to be something of that sort at Dundee; a gentleman who came from that quarter, had contradicted that to his satisfaction. An insurrection had been said to have taken place at Salisbury; a gentleman who was supposed to know, had said, that no man in his senses could call it an insurrection. At Shields there had been a disturbance, but not of a political nature, and on the part of the populace the complaints were so just, that the very magistrates advised that they should be attended to. What then was meant by the alarming military preparation all over the country? for he came through a vast deal of it in his way to London. All he now wanted to know of the Minister was, what answer he was to give to his constituents when he returned to them, if they should ask what was the reason of these military preparations? If not, he would say,

— Why do you make us fools of nature,  
~~Thus~~ so horribly to shake our dispositions  
 With thoughts beyond the reaches of our souls.

At Manchester indeed there had been a riot, but that was since the meeting of the House, and in consequence of what had been said in it by some of the Minister's friends, and the cry was "Church and King!" It was a loyal mob; so was the mob at Birmingham. What raised it, and what would raise it? The conduct of His Majesty's Ministers. He had been accused of being an enemy to Government: he was calumniated. He loved the monarchy, he loved the aristocracy, he loved the democracy of this country; but he had no attachment to the abuses in any department whatever. This, he believed, was the sentiment of every man with whom he acted; and while his right honourable friend and leader (Mr. Fox), with his transcendent abilities, and others he esteemed, stood in the gap between obstinacy and prejudice on the one hand, and unprincipled licentiousness on the other, he would stand

by them, and fight by them, without fear or dread. While he was the leader, *de republica non desperandum*.

Mr. WINDHAM rose to set the honourable gentleman right concerning a passage in his speech which he had misconceived. He said that he had not asserted that this country was in a confederation with foreign powers against France; but that we ought not to act so as to preclude ourselves from joining such confederation.

Mr. WHITBREAD said, that the conduct which had been recommended by the mover of the question did not tend to preclude a junction of that nature.

Mr. GRANT opposed the motion before the House. All the foreign jurists and celebrated writers on the law of nations, he said, had laid it down as a clear and indubitable principle of propriety, that rivers belonged to those who inhabited their banks, just as far, and no farther, than those banks extended. If the banks belonged to different people, then the dominion over the river was divided, each people possessing the part that was contiguous to their domain; and such was the policy of this distribution, that if it had not been so laid down by the ablest writers on the laws of nations, it would have been a positive stipulation indispensably necessary under the law of nations, for without it no state could be secure. If the course of rivers was, as is contended by the French, as open and common to mankind as the sea itself, a fleet of French and Spaniards might sail up the Thames, and we should have no right to molest them until they actually began hostilities. Agreeable to this law of nations, we find every other civilised state had invariably acted. It had been stated by an honourable gentleman (Mr. Jenkinson) very truly, that the Danube traversed both the territories of Austria and Turkey, yet neither the Porte nor the Court of Vienna ever pretended to pass the limits of their territorial bounds. The mouth of the Scheldt, therefore, he contended, being between the banks of Holland, gave them, under the law of nature and nations, a most incontrovertible right to the exclusive possession of that river as far as their banks extended; but, independent of general doctrine, that right has been repeatedly acknowledged and ratified by express treaty with the sovereign power of that country, which alone could have any pretence to interfere.

As well might France interpose, therefore, between the Spaniards and English, relative to the regulations of the navigation of the river Mississippi in America. Their interference relative to the Scheldt shews no less arrogance and injustice than a rooted contempt of existing order and moral obligation. Beside, why should we send an ambassador to France, when the subject matter of contention lay between our allies, the Dutch, and Brabant. The French had not conquered the Netherlands, by their own declaration; they had only restored the sovereignty of the people. Shall France be suffered, therefore, to arrogate to itself the umpirage of all disputes in Europe? The restless, meddling disposition of that country, which an honourable gentleman (Mr. Jenkinson) had declared was so long the scourge of mankind under the despotism of its Crown, seemed now no less disposed to blast the happiness of man under the still more wild and unlimited despotism of the people. It is not pretended that the Brabanters themselves complained, though perhaps by this time the conjoined efforts of artifice and force, which their protective and humane allies so incessantly exert, may have instigated some idea of grievance.

But, after all, why send an ambassador any where: negotiation could only be effectual where some object of doubt and uncertainty existed. The late affair relative to Spain and this country was a proper object of negotiation. In the vast tract of country where the object arose the metes and boundaries were indefinite and obscure, the measures complained of might not have been authorised or countenanced by the Court of Spain, and complete restitution and indemnification might have been made. But if France by surprise had seized on Portsmouth, or any other of our harbours, or had declared its intention of doing so, would Englishmen condescend to send an ambassador to negotiate? They have declared publicly their intention of unjustly invading the rights of our allies; and their rights, while faith and honour remained in England, were the rights of Englishmen. What is there to negotiate? The French admit the subsisting treaties, but deny their force. Instead of a statesman, you should send a professor of casuistry. Nothing remained for inquiry but an abstract and metaphysical question on the moral competence of contracts. Shall it be

allowed that the first principle of morals shall be controverted, and the community of nations turned into a school of metaphysical sceptics? At last, *cui bono*? suppose you settle the dispute with the present executive council, their successors, armed with the natural, imprescriptible rights of man, will, by the very same reasons, deny their right to settle it. You can obtain nothing short of total abandonment but what the metaphysical wand of these perverted logicians will destroy, as by magic. What! bind by treaty the rights of man! It is impossible, they would exclaim — nature forbids it — right is paramount to treaty. Those with whom you negotiated thus exceeded their power, and betrayed their constituents, and the contract is therefore void. Having thus surveyed the motion as it related to right and utility, he adverted with much additional force to the indignity such a proceeding would throw on this country, and concluded with a decided negative to the motion.

Sir WILLIAM YOUNG said, that he should by no means have chosen to follow the last speaker, who had displayed such ability as little inclined him to provoke a comparison by rising so immediately after him, but that the times required every man's taking a decided part, and he wished to seize the first occasion of pledging himself to the service of his country and our happy constitution of Government, independent of all personal considerations whatever, and begged to assert that independence for himself by declaring, that however he was fully inclined to support the present Administration of Government, he did it conditionally, on their adhering to the measures that suited the exigencies of the country and the principles of the Constitution. These were his true and only grounds of attachment to them, for he certainly would never receive place or office under any Administration whatever. Gentlemen should cease to look to one side of the House or to the other: they should look only to the welfare of their country — so the times required. For the question of sending an Ambassador to Paris, he would not treat over the ground so ably taken up by the last speaker: he would add, however, two observations on the policy of the measure. First, as to the French Assembly receiving a British Ambassador: is it not rather to be presumed they will not treat but conditionally — he thought it was so to

be presumed—we were to judge of the future by the past. When the Duke of Brunswick sent to negotiate during his retreat, the haughty answer was that of the Roman to Pyrrhus: “We will not treat whilst you are in our country.”—Are we prepared for an answer of like import? Are we prepared, as a preliminary step, to disembowel the militia, and lay aside our naval preparations? If England could descend to so base and humiliating a procedure, yet another consideration is to be obviated. Can we acknowledge the Constitution of the French Republic? Have themselves acknowledged a Constitution? They have not. They have a Committee at this hour preparing one. Mark the consequences in treaty. England, treating with the present provisional Government, is bound to the succeeding Government. The succeeding Government will not be bound to England. England signs express conditions—France has thus on the other side a *charte blanche*. England must adhere—France may adhere, or may not.

Having said so much of the treaty merely in the light of a federal treaty with a foreign power, Sir William begged to consider it for a moment in a domestic point of view, and in this light it struck him as rather a commercial treaty—a treaty for the more easy and ready import of plots and treasons. He by no means imputed bad motives to those who supported the motion. Different persons saw different objects in various points of view, and under divers colours, and the arguments that were convincing to one mind, did not appear so to another; for his own mind it was so framed, that it could admit no argument in favour of the motion that did not have a favouring of national cowardice or treachery—a mean and timid petition to France, or resort to French connection, for support of British treasons. However, he perfectly exculpated others of a different opinion from the one or the other of these motives, as they acted on other considerations, and which did not come home to his mind; yet for himself he was thus bound to oppose and reprobate the measure. He would farther reprobate the language for the two days past held in that House as of a party kind, and not quite partaking of that candour and moderation with which gentlemen on the other side of the House mutually complimented each other—as the Dutch Governor of Batavia, who smoked his pipe silently whilst the can-

non answered to the toasts of "The Stadtholder" and of "Their High Mightinesses," but when his Excellency was toasted, gravely rose, and audibly gave, "Myn own good health." He could not term it candour and moderation to repeat, as a watch-word of Opposition, "Government has calumniated the loyalty of the People," when early on the first day a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) had put this matter in so clear and strong a point of view when he asked "Whether Cicero calumniated the loyalty of the Roman people when he most virulently reprobated Catiline and his conspirators in league with Gaul against the constitution of the Roman republic?" The unwarrantably declaring Government to have calumniated the loyalty of the People is itself a calumny, tending to breed disaffection; and, on the other side, the frequent declarations that there are none disaffected and plotting against their country, have the bad tendency to set the vigilance of the country asleep, and give advantage to designing and disloyal subjects. He therefore called on Government and on the Nation to redouble their vigilance in proportion as such arguments and language were used; and for himself, whether as a militia-man, a magistrate, or representative in that House, he would, to the best of his abilities, second the efforts of Government, and the more so, as he was aware of the necessity, from instances of incendiaries in his own neighbourhood in the country. — [There was here a call of Name! Name! which was not complied with.]—Sir William sat down, pledging himself, in the strongest manner, to an independent support of Government in their measures for obviating danger to the country, either within the kingdom or from without.

Mr. BURKE bestowed the warmest panegyric on Mr. Jenkinson, Mr. Frederic North, and other young gentlemen who had gloriously stood forward to resist the growing evils. They inherited all the talents and virtues of their illustrious fathers, whose eloquence had often attracted the admiration of the House. In them the new doctrines, which menaced destruction to all lovers of peace and order, would find very powerful opponents. While they remained in the field of action, armed at all points for the combat, while the patriotism of their fathers animated them in defence of the Constitution,

while they were emboldened and invigorated by the growing danger, the People need not tremble for the pernicious consequences of the new system of France, accompanied by the threatened argument of the sword. In the formidable phalanx which now appeared the country might repose the greatest confidence. They would dash and repel the impending storm. So might it always be. Might there be an eternal succession of talents and principles adverse to these new French doctrines —

*Tumvos, O Tyrii, stirpem et genus omne iustum  
Exercete odiis : cinerique hæc mittite nostro  
Munera. Nullus amor populis nec foedera sunt.  
Litora litoribus contraria, fluctibus undas  
Imprecor, arma armis : pugnent ipsi que nepotes.*

If called upon in defence of our liberties, the friends of the Constitution would enter the lists in battle array : they would oppose the enemy man to man, foot to foot, and shield to shield. A learned gentleman (Mr. Erskine), who seemed a convert to the new doctrines, had exemplified in his conduct the truth and wisdom of the ancient adage, “ Know yourself.” With the greatest care he endeavoured to impress upon the minds of his hearers, that, till now, he had cautiously avoided speaking of the affairs or government of France. Thus he very wisely displayed the force of his eloquence in silence ; and had he still adhered to that mode of reasoning, the House, if a judgement might be formed from his speech that night, would have had no cause to lament the delicate suppression of his sentiments. His sagacity was best expressed by his silence. How could he otherwise treat the Government and Constitution of France, which had no existence whatever ? It was a proper and delicate sensibility to remain silent on this ideal subject, unless, in the hey-day of his enthusiasm, he yielded to the impulse of fiction. It was yet in a state of chaos. But the learned gentleman’s modesty o’erstepped now the limits of his former discretion, and he came forward an advocate for that Constitution which had no existence. If he declined a defence to the full extent, he at least advanced half way, fortified very ingeniously by his mental reservation. In deprecating the calamities of war against a nation of barbarians, he sup-



ported his hypothesis by an admirable quotation from the late Dr. Johnson :—" As the right of rivers had lately become the " topic of discussion, and as the new advocates for nature did " not hesitate to commit infractions of all treaties, by a total " destruction to the laws of nations, so the learned gentleman, " by his wide excursion in the fields of fancy, impelled by the " full tide of the new doctrines, presented to our heated imagination his own opinions and those of the celebrated author, crossing each other like the Rhone and the Sone—the " slender streams of the former swallowed up in the immense " gulph of the latter." In calling in the aid of Dr. Johnson to enforce his arguments against a foreign war, the learned gentleman produced a very formidable champion indeed. He was a great and a good man : his virtues were equal to his transcendent talents, and his friendship he valued as the greatest consolation and happiness of his life. It might, however, escape the learned gentleman's memory, that this eminent author, who wrote with such energy against a foreign war, had afterwards, on the memorable rupture between this country and America, summoned all his vigour and eloquence in vindication of a civil war. He wished sincerely that hostilities might be avoided ; but if our just resentment were fulminated against the assassins who offered us the comforts of fire and sword, a civil war might be prevented in England. The French agents were remarkably active in exciting commotions. The arm of power ought to crush them — a criminal suspension would entail upon our fellow subjects most dreadful disasters. In the mad, wicked, and abominable career of the French, he had fondly hoped that ere now the hand of nature would have arrested them ; that they would have been brought to condign punishment for their manifold and unparalleled iniquities, and precipitated with a tenfold fury to that place so happily congenial with their horrid dispositions. But it did not as yet please Providence to check their progress. They had inundated their murderous myrmidons into Savoy and Brabant ; had perhaps before this time commenced hostilities against our allies the Dutch, proudly anticipated a conquest of the whole Continent, and menaced Great Britain with their doctrine and their arms. These were serious facts, and demanded immediately the most active exertions. In this dread-

ful dilemma were we to abandon Government? No; let us strengthen their strength; let us teach a gang of homicides and regicides what they have to expect from a dignified people, emulous of each other in the cause of true liberty. Alluding to Mr. Erskine's excursion to the Continent, Mr. Burke ironically observed, "Perhaps the learned gentleman's present speech and former silence arose from his ignorance of the state of France! Perhaps he never was in that happy country! Perhaps he never saw the Jacobin Club! Perhaps he knows nothing of the leading worthies! Perhaps he knows nothing of any Member of the Convention!—No! No!—He is totally unacquainted with these innocent lambs!—Hence his admirable speech! Hence his most excellent declamation against the horrors of war!—To gratify the learned gentleman's ambition, and sure I am, no man possesses a greater portion, I wish he would undertake the arduous office of Ambassador to Paris, provided he promises not to travel out of the *record*—not to go beyond the instructions in his *brief*!"—Mr. Burke lamented, that, whenever the subject of France came under discussion, he was annoyed and singled out for acrimony and invective. He defended Government from principle, not interest. Strange as it might appear to some gentlemen with whom he formerly acted, he affirmed, in the face of the House and his country, "I retain, and ever will, my independence: I have made no provision for myself or family: we are not in the possession of any office; neither cajoled by the reversion of place, nor by the promise of pension; and yet, because I have warmly expressed my abhorrence of the French doctrines, I am pursued and reviled with all the force of rancour and hostility." But sometimes the best effects have arisen from the worst causes; the evil designs and calumnies now manifested by a certain description of men assume too bold features to be mistaken, or passed over in silent contempt. There are assailants of eminence with whom it is no disgrace to grapple. Whenever invited to the combat, he would collect all his fortitude, and obey the summons. His hardihood might, perhaps, be eclipsed in the conflict; but he would convince the world that he possessed resolution. By whom were we annoyed? By Frost, whom we all knew; by Sempill, whom I have not the

honour of knowing ; perhaps the opposite gentlemen are well acquainted with him---by Joel---Joel (the prophet) of whom I have heard. These are the respectable gentlemen---the Gods --- the *Dii minorum gentium* --- who threaten to lay our capital and Constitution in the same ruin.

Why have the French, who cherish and protect the traitors, offered to aid and abet the downfall of our Government ? Because the unfledged republicans have determined to wage war against every monarchy. Having a King who commands the affections of his people, the criminality on our part is unpardonable in their eyes. Kings are anointed with oil --- the new Sovereignty of the People with blood ! The recent massacres, at which all Europe revolted, heightened this striking likeness ; and none but the murderers themselves could help deploring the shocking barbarities, which exceeded all ancient and modern flagitiousness. Those who were advocates for an Ambassador to Paris ought seriously to reflect in what an awkward predicament they placed such a gentleman. They appointed an Ambassador to a People who had no Government, no Administrators, and who had denounced the most implacable hatred against all Kings ! But, say they, Ambassadors have been sent thither from other potentates. Be it so. Let them receive Ambassadors from all quarters of the globe ; from Capadocia, from Pergamus, from America, from Abyssinia. Let all these congratulate each other on their agreeable and enviable residence. But let no Ambassador go thither from Great Britain. If we condescended to acknowledge them by an Ambassador, might they not insult him by saying, Who sent you ? The King or the People of England ? The King, most certainly, answers the Ambassador. The King ! Return from whence you came : we never sent for you : we have passed an irrevocable declaration against all tyranny ! And thus, if the motion were agreed to, we should jostle in the dark, and expose ourselves to the insolence of the basest of mankind---monsters who outrage every law human and divine. In this degrading situation the British Ambassador would sink into the humble character of a Popish Ambassador of Obedience, not permitted to exercise his function but by the charitable sufferance of his tyrants. Mr. Fox had justified the incursion of Dumourier into Brabant, on the principle of re-

tort for the invasion of the combined armies. Admirable reasoning! Thus we were not only to guarantee their new liberty by an Ambassador, but allow them the peaceable possession of the Austrian Netherlands, and acknowledge their right to open the Scheldt. All these acquisitions, Holland, the whole continent, and much more—were we to grant them, by way of costs and damages! Thus the laws of nature superseded the laws of nations; and Great Britain, in her turn, would be left to the mercy of the honest and innocent republicans of France! If a treaty opposed their ambition, they immediately affirmed, that it was contrary to the laws of nature; and reduced every moral obligation to the same levelling principle. Mr. Burke made a ludicrous objection to the motion in the following manner: If, when the British Ambassador appears at the bar, his commission, among other things, happened to state—"George the Third, by the grace of God!" Would not all the convention be immediately convulsed with laughter? The President, Robespierre, and Marat, sworn enemies to Kings, would scarcely be able to keep their indignation within bounds. On the one side, Citizen Frost would inflame their resentment; on the other, Citizen Paine would proceed to denounce us. But, say some of the supporters of the motion, what right have we to enter upon a crusade in the cause of Kings? We are safe in this country, and our King reigns in the hearts of his people. The French malady complained of can never disturb our tranquillity---

*Et penitus toto divisos orbe Britannos.*

Our insular situation, they affirm, is proof against every innovation. They talk as if England were not in Europe.—The French savages having so horribly stained Europe, he, for one, would have no objection if they could prove the truth of their assertion; and persuade us to the belief that England was in another quarter of the globe! In the conference with the British Ambassador, the Members of the Convention might ask—Are you the representative of a routed faction who have murdered your King? No! Then we can have no transaction with you. Fill up the measure of our laudable principles, and then we will treat with you. Shocking to think! Perhaps even now the Barbarians are embruing their hands in the

blood of the unhappy prisoners ! If their fate be not yet finally decided, look around, and observe their Judges—Among other men who reflect honour on human nature, are Citizen Frost, and Citizen Paine, of the most unblemished characters ! Being a general lover of new constitutions—being enthusiastically fond of projectors—he was not surprised, that the learned gentleman undertook to plead Paine's cause.

[While Mr. Burke was speaking, a Member was named by the Speaker as interrupting the decorum of debate. He was ordered to withdraw, and after some conversation on enforcing the order for censuring him in his place, on his sending in an apology by another Member, it was agreed to pass over the whole matter.]

Mr. BURKE resumed his speech. Having now decided a point of order in this House, we return to the transactions of another Assembly, not so famous for order ! But by whom is the unfortunate King accused ? By Citizen Paine on the one hand, and Citizen Frost on the other. Are these Frenchmen ? No. They are not Frenchmen by birth, but Frenchmen by merit. Thus, France adopts Citizens from all nations, and such a group of abandoned and unprincipled Citizens as no other nation on the face of the earth will receive. Instead of navigating the Scheldt, these wretches navigate the Styx only ; and announce slaughter and destruction to all mankind. Are these the men to whom we purpose to send an Ambassador ? Are we to petition them for peace ? Are we to humble ourselves before Judge Paine ? No. Let us not appear through that degrading medium, till Citizen Paine ceases to appear before us as a culprit ! By some it might perhaps be sarcastically asked—How Citizen Franklin, with whom Citizen Paine was formerly intimate, came to have his actions honoured with an Ambassador ? And why I suffered such a degradation ? The answer was obvious : Citizen Franklin had never advised the extirpation of all Kings. When the independence of America was acknowledged, all Franklin's crimes were absolved. The difference between these two was great in another view.—Franklin was a native of America ; Paine was born in England, and lived under the protection of our laws : but instigated by his evil genius, he conspired against the very country which gave him birth ; by attempting to introduce the new

and pernicious doctrines of republicanism. During the American war, we hear of no acts of barbarity—no deliberate murders—no dethronement and decapitation of Kings. There appeared more atrocious guilt in France in one day, than in America and England in seven years. How can we avoid war, when France has denounced destruction against all the Kings of Europe? We are therefore forced, on principles of self-defence, into a confederacy with all the Sovereigns of Europe. “I say, we are now engaged in actual war!” The question consequently is—Will you tamely surrender yourselves to Citizens Frost and Paine? Forbid it Heaven! Forbid it Justice! Forbid it humanity! Yield to traitors to their King? To a nation of murderers? Stain the illustrious pages of our history with such profanation and impiety? May God, in his infinite mercy, add vigour to our arm to check the encroachments of those monsters of society! In the plenitude of their spleen and malevolence, the gentlemen on the opposite side were unmanly enough to attack Mr. Pitt in his absence. It was certainly uncandid and ungenerous to vilify and to criminate him when not present to defend himself. Were he now in the House, he might perhaps easily repel their shafts of malignity, and make them rebound on the heads of his adversaries. These remarks arose not from the smallest insinuation, that he was not very ably vindicated by Mr. Dundas and other friends; but the artillery of opposition had continued such an incessant fire since the opening of the session, as to excite not only his astonishment, but that of every lover of the King and constitution. His strongest objection to an Ambassador in Paris arose from the present perilous period, when not only the peace of Europe was outraged, but disturbances fomented by French emissaries in the very bosom of our own dominions. We do not wantonly plunge ourselves in war. We are driven to the desperate expedient by an aggression of our freedom—We have no alternative—We cannot remain silent and inactive, when the independence of Great Britain is endangered—Considering these alarming circumstances, an enemy to subdue within, and invaders to repel without, we were never engaged in a war which required more vigorous exertions. Mr. Burke concluded with reading, from a slip of paper, a declaration, which he wished to be avowed as the grounds of the conduct

of the executive power, in order that the people of England might know that if there must be a war, it had arisen from the proceedings of those among themselves, who by their seditious practices had provoked it: and that a war with France was necessary for the security of the liberties of England, the interests of Europe, and the happiness of mankind.

Mr. COURTENAY said, that he had of late learnt, from the speech of the right honourable gentleman who spoke last, three points of material importance, which he should otherwise never have conceived: 1st, That we were at war with France; 2dly, That to send an Ambassador to that country, would be suing for peace; and 3dly, That we ought to make war, in order to exterminate the French metaphysicians. The right honourable gentleman, however, had proceeded to a greater extent, having damned all Frenchmen to the third and fourth generation. [A clamour arising on the Ministerial side of the House.] Mr. Courtenay declared, that he did not wonder at the clamour, because it proceeded from the inarticulate Members, who, never affording any information to the House, adopted this as the only method within their power of causing themselves to be heard.

He maintained that Mr. Burke's assertion gave the most positive contradiction to the King's speech. It certainly insinuated, that we were not yet in an actual state of war; but the right honourable gentleman, overstepping the bounds of discretion, displayed his superior intelligence, by roundly and unequivocally affirming that we were. Mr. Courtenay concurred in the wishes of all his friends, by sincerely hoping, that Mr. Burke's information, so far as regarded the commencement of hostilities, was somewhat short of the truth; and that what the great orator admired in theory, would not be put in practice. In the violent declamation against republicanism, which shook the senate, Mr. Burke had calumniated the French nation in the most opprobrious and unmanly manner. Seizing with avidity the prominent features of certain detestable characters, he very judiciously and very liberally bestowed condemnation upon the whole, because some individuals had committed acts of outrage, and deserved the most condign punishment. The right honourable gentleman put up the Members of the National Convention like ninepins, and bowled them down as his

inexhaustible fancy directed. But the French Assembly acted with more dignity than he represented; and the language of common civility was at least due to them. With regard to the impolicy of sending an Ambassador to Paris, he widely differed from the right honourable gentleman. Had not Sweden an Ambassador there? Had not Naples an Ambassador there?—Were not the Royal Family of Naples nearly related to that of France, whose fate he, as well as every good man, sincerely deplored? How then could our Ambassador be degraded? But the right honourable gentleman allows himself to be hurried away by his implacable hatred to the French, whom he has ingeniously described conquering every where, with the sword in one hand, and the Rights of Man in the other! He commended very highly the honourable testimony which Mr. Burke had given in favour of the English soldiers in America, who were now very generously presented with absolution. This artifice to render himself popular among the military, would undoubtedly be crowned with success. A recantation of past errors was an act of magnanimity. Could he, however, forget his conduct during the American war? Could he forget his prayers for the success of the American arms? Could he forget his enthusiasm in favour of republicanism? Was his memory so frail and fleeting, that he could not remember how he wept over the fate of the rebel Montgomery—how he exulted at the victories of the rebel Washington? Was it so treacherous, that he could not remember his complaint against the imprisonment in the Tower of Mr. Laurens, the Chief Magistrate of the greatest Republic in the world? But success changes the opinions of men. Dr. Franklin's crimes, as we have now been told by Mr. Burke, were pardoned by the recognition of American independence: and perhaps he, or some other orator, equally ingenious, will boldly affirm, that the murderers of Paris are pardoned by the recognition of the French Republic! His praise of Mr. Jenkinson, who so closely followed the steps of his illustrious father, Mr. Courtenay also highly applauded. It was a timely and sincere tribute to the talents of a man who had never experienced Mr. Burke's resentment! Mr. Burke, upon every occasion, had represented the French as a nation of assassins. The letter to that effect, addressed to the National



Assembly, may be considered as a prelude to the Duke of Brunswick's Manifesto.

He confessed that he had not been in France "in the days of chivalry." He had not seen seventeen years ago "delightful visions" in that country. But he had been there a short time since, when he saw sights that would have "created a soul under the ribs of death." He saw fathers devoting their sons, wives their husbands, mothers their children, to the service of their country. Oh! if there were men to whom this sight would not be grateful, he had only to say, those men were not objects of his envy.

Indeed he felt sorrowful in the extreme, when he read the audacious, the unprincipled, the shocking manifestoes of the Duke of Brunswick; but that sorrow was changed to rapture when a short time subsequent to the publication of the late manifesto, the Duke and his disciplined ruffians were driven disgracefully out of France. He rejoiced at the subsequent successes of the French. Their glorious expedition in Brabant—ther liberation of Flanders.

He had lived to see the genius of liberty inspire the French with a portion of noble ardour, which the slaves of despots found irresistible. To see the Duke of Brunswick's disciplined ruffians fly before republican energy, to hear of the battle of Jemmappe, when the fighting machines of aristocracy retired with disgrace, and left the field to freemen, emulous of true glory. These are the men whom Mr. Burke has reviled; these are the men against whom, to increase the blessings of our constitution, he urges us to wage war. Are we become so senseless, so petrified, so deadened to justice and humanity, as to listen for a moment to such pernicious sophistry? The proclamation, which, no doubt, was very well intended, has been productive of two mobs only—those of Birmingham and Manchester—who both bellowed the favourite cry of "Church and King!" Ministry had certainly acted in a bungling manner. Before this time, there ought to have been Church and King mobs all over the kingdom. Where are the insurrections said to be against the constitution? When the tree of liberty was expected, according to the ministerial report, to be planted on Kennington Common, the troops were almost starved, waiting for the insurrection. This reminded him of

a story of Lord Craven, in the reign of Charles the Second.—His Lordship was always present at fires—A house being burnt in the city, the King asked if Lord Craven was there, “ Oh “ yes,” exclaimed a Courtier in reply, “ he was there waiting for the fire three hours before it broke out.”

Mr. Burke, it was a lamentable fact, was the dupe of his imagination. If France be only hinted at, the right honourable gentleman immediately yields to his favourite passion.—Off he dashes, with some whipping and spurring, that he may travel the remainder of his journey with alacrity. Talk of a republican Government, then suddenly his magic lantern appears; and he produces Paine! Frost! Carra! Marat! Roberespierre, &c. dancing in a merry confusion. He sports till he himself is sickened; and till the most jocular become serious. Thus (said Mr. Courtenay) have I taken the liberty of delivering my sentiments on the present state of affairs. They exactly correspond with those of my right honourable friend (Mr. Fox.) “ While I live and breathe I will maintain these “ opinions. I know the public and private virtues of my “ right honourable friend; and whenever I separate from him, “ I shall consider that day the most degraded of my life.”

Sir JAMES MURRAY opposed the motion. He concurred with those who contended for the dangers attending a war; it was a measure truly alarming and dangerous, from the internal situation of this country, and which therefore nothing could justify but the most urgent necessity; but if such necessity should be found really to exist, he, in opposition to the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) who had, on a former night, so highly coloured, or rather discoloured, the little dependence to be placed on our foreign connections, was most decidedly of opinion we had every thing to hope for, both in assistance and success from those connections. To prove this position he took a view of the Dutch, Prussians, and Austrians, and other powers of Europe, as they of necessity stood affected towards France, and contended we must receive their unlimited and unabated assistance to the aid of any struggles we may unhappily be drawn into upon this occasion. He also defended the Duke of Brunswick from those imputations of cruelty attached to him on account of his proclamation, by assuring the House, from his own personal knowledge, that

no acts of cruelty were either in the contemplation of, or exercised by the Austrians, in their irruption into France, and that the Manifesto that had given so much offence was merely intended to terrify the inhabitants into a submission, and at most could only be called bullying. Indeed had he been aware that any thing would have been said on this subject, he would have put in his pocket, and read to the House, General Dumourier's manifesto, upon his irruption into the Low Countries, and they would almost find the precise terms in that, which had given so much offence as coming from the Duke of Brunswick; and yet he did not believe, nor would they, that there existed any serious intention to carry such threats into execution.

Mr. SHERIDAN begun with observing that it had not been his intention to have said a word on the present question, and indeed he had been able to attend only a part of the debate; the substance of the motion had been discussed in the debate of yesterday, and his right honourable friend had given notice that he should make this motion merely to record on the journals his protest against the proceedings which the House was so weakly running into, and this he (Mr. Fox) had done at a time when he deprecated discussion, because as the House knew he had not voice to defend his opinion. Gentlemen on the other side however had thought proper to raise their tone upon the confession of the inability of his right honourable friend to defend his arguments, and never since he had sat in Parliament had he heard a question so perversely argued, or the mover of it so unjustly treated. This compelled him to trespass on the indulgence of the House, late as the hour was, and he must be excused for paying no respect whatever to the observation of a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke), that it was improper to bring forward these discussions in the absence of His Majesty's first Minister! This was a tender respect to the dignity of office in that right honourable gentleman; but he must be permitted to say, that the representation of the country was indeed placed in a degraded light, if it was to be maintained that the great Council of the nation was not in this momentous crisis a competent Court to discuss the dearest interests of the people, unless the presence of a certain Minister of the Crown sanctioned their deliberations. But on what

ground did they regret the absence of the Treasury leader?— Had there appeared any want of numbers or ability to compensate for this loss? What exertion that he could have furnished had been unsupplied? Had there been any want of splendid and sonorous declamation to cover a meagreness of argument? Any want of virulence of invective to supply the place of proof in accusation? Any want of inflammatory appeals to the passions where reason and judgement were unsafe to be resorted to? Unquestionably in all these respects, the Chancellor of the Exchequer had not been missed; in one article indeed they might be justified in regretting his absence.— They had been pressed to prove the facts asserted in the King's speech, and in the proclamation; not an atom of information could any present Member of the Government furnish; doubtless therefore the insurrection was a secret deposited in the breast of the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and he had taken in his pocket all the proofs of the plot to assist his election at Cambridge.

Mr. Sheridan then said, that as he certainly should not follow the fury of the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) through the fury of his general invective, so neither would he pursue him in that vein of lightness and pleasantry by which he had contrived to make the gravest hour this country ever saw, appear to be a moment of peculiar mirth and relaxation. He would confine himself to the question, which he thought lay in a very narrow compass. His honourable friend had recommended, that before we plunged into a war, and drew upon the treasure and blood of the people of Great Britain, we should try, if possible, to settle the matter in dispute by negotiation, and shew to the people that we had so tried. This his right honourable friend had recommended as a duty which we owed to our constituents, be the character and principles of the power with whom we are disputing what they may. Was it credible that a proposition of this nature should have been received with such heat? Reason and duty at any other time must have supported it. But the fact was, that the moment was unfortunate; the time was full of heat and irritation; natural and artificial Government had thought it their interest to inflame this disposition. Intelligence was expected of a catastrophe in France, which all humane hearts deprecated, and would equally

deplore ; in this temper, therefore, the public mind was worked up to a blind and furious hostility against France, and the dearest interests of our own country were to be risked at the call of a momentary enthusiasm, which, if not bottomed in sound policy and sound sense, was sure not to be lasting. Could there be a stronger proof of this temper, than the manner in which an honourable and learned Member (Mr. Grant) had supported his argument. The most successful passage in his able speech, turned upon a passionate appeal to the pride and dignity of the English nation. He thinks proper to assume, that any thing like negotiation at present, would be a petition for mercy and forbearance from the French nation : and then he triumphantly exclaimed, with a triumphant cry, acknowledging the excellence of his argument, “ Draw your petition, and where is the man, with a British heart within his bosom, who will sign it ! ” What unfairness is this ! said Mr. Sheridan ; and how can a man of his abilities stoop to a trick of argument which he must despise. Petition ! ridiculous ! Was there no mode between nations of demanding explanation for an injury given or meditated, but by petition ? Did we petition the Court of Spain in the affair of Nootka Sound ? Did we petition France in the dispute respecting this very Holland in 1787 ? Or did the learned gentleman believe that, notwithstanding these instances, there was something so peculiarly meek, pliant, and bending in the character of the first Minister, that it was quite impossible for him to assume a lofty tone or a haughty air for any purpose ? The case of Russia, however, Mr. Sheridan ridiculed and excepted. To judge by that alone, he admitted that the learned gentleman might be justified in apprehending that every menace of this Government was to end in an act of meanness ; that, whenever he saw the Minister in the attitude of threatening, he might expect to see him in the act of conceding ; and that, if he armed, it was in order to petition for mercy. Without this inference from the past conduct of the administration, the general argument was idle, and all the proud acclamations it had produced were wholly thrown away.

Mr. Sheridan next adverted to the declaration of Mr. Windham, that as he was of opinion that moral propriety prohibited our treating or having any intercourse with France, he

had rather, if it ever took place, that it should be matter of necessity, and not of choice. This Mr. Sheridan treated as a sentiment not consistent with the usual precision of understanding which characterized that honourable gentleman. It was admitted that some time or other we must treat with the French, for eternal war or the extirpation of the nation was not yet avowed by any one. Necessity then was to be looked to, to give us a moral excuse, and whence was that necessity to arrive? from defeat, from discomfiture, from shame and disgrace. Happy prospect to look to, which would excuse us as it did the Duke of Saxe Teschen in his glorious retreat from the contamination of treating with this nation of robbers and murderers, as they are stiled. Happy, dignified opportunity to treat, when we should be completely at their mercy. Unquestionably we should then be justified, and certainly we should be undone: but the honourable gentleman argued as if this case of necessity, through defeat, could alone justify us in negotiating with such a foe, what! did he not perceive that an equal necessity might arise from our success? We went to war for a specific object—the Minister avowed and explained that object.

Admit that we are victorious and obtain it—is not the war to cease when the object of it is obtained? And if to cease, how but by some intercourse or agreement of some sort or other? Here there would be a situation in which negotiation must arise, not from necessity and defeat, but from victory and justice, all nicety and strained morality, and meek dignity, therefore about the thing itself was trifling; and as to waiting that time might operate, he did not conceive that if that time was to be spent in war and blows, much advance would be made in the spirit of conciliation. In stating the question this way, Mr. Sheridan said, he argued on the declared grounds which His Majesty's speech and the Ministers gave for the war; for if he were to argue on the ground on which the war was urged with such impassioned and popular eloquence by other gentlemen, in that case he must despair of ever seeing peace return to the earth. With them was the motive to keep faith with our allies? Was the object to preserve Holland? Or to resent the incendiary decree of the National Convention?—Nothing like it through all their speeches; they scarcely

designed to mention such little and limited purposes. No--- their declared object was to avenge all the outrages which have been committed in France, to reinstate, if possible, all that has been overthrown, to exterminate the principles and the people who preach the principles which they reprobate. As Philip demanded the orators of Athens to be delivered up to him as his most formidable enemies, these gentlemen must have all the democratic metaphysicians of France extirpated, or they cannot sleep in their beds. In short, the whole bearing of the arguments and instigations they used to rouse the House to hostility, went to advise a war which never was to cease, but in the total overthrow of the French republic, and the extermination of all who had supported it. Was the House, was the country ready to vote a war for such an object, and on such principles? We were told that we must not differ with the allied powers, with whom we were in future to co-operate. Were we then to make a common cause in the principles, and for the purposes for which these despots associated? Were the free and generous people of England ready to subscribe to the Duke of Brunswick's manifesto? That hateful outrage on the rights and feelings of human nature, that wretched issue of impotent pride, folly and inhumanity, that proclamation which had steeled the heart and maddened the brain of all France, which had provoked those it had devoted to practise all the cruelties it had impotently threatened to inflict, which had sharpened the daggers of the assassins of the 2d of September, which had whetted the axe now suspended over the unfortunate Monarch---was the nation ready to subscribe to this absurd and detestable rhapsody? An honourable officer (Sir James Murray) had attempted to defend this performance, but how? By denying that it intended what it professed and threatened. From a British officer of his character and understanding, a different defence might be expected; the honourable Baronet had given instances where the conduct of the Prussian army contradicted the spirit of their manifesto--- what instances, on the contrary side, might be adduced, he would not then discuss. One case alone had been sufficient to decide him as to the true spirit of the league. The brutal rigour with which La Fayette had been treated: whatever else he was, he was a brave man, and he was in their power.---

The use they had made of that power sufficiently shewed how they would have treated others, whom they might well consider as entitled to ten-fold enmity. The worthy Baronet, concluded Mr. Sheridan, thinks they never meant to carry their proclamation into execution; I thank God they never had the opportunity. He proceeded to reprobate the idea of Great Britain engaging in the war on the principles of the allies; and yet how difficult was it to co-operate in their efforts, yet disconnect their motives and their ends! This was a serious consideration for Parliament. The question was not merely whether we should go to war or not, but on what principles, to what end, and pledged to what confederacy we should go to war. For his part, he had declared, and, he hoped, with sufficient frankness and fairness, that, if war must be, the defence of the country and its constitution would be the single consideration in his mind! And for that purpose he would support the executive Government, in whatever hands His Majesty placed it. But in this declaration he referred to a war undertaken on the necessity, and directed to the objects stated by His Majesty and his Ministers. He did not refer to the crusade of chastisement and vengeance, which the zeal of some gentlemen recommended, and the clamour of the house seemed so ready to adopt. He would never consent that one English guinea should be spent, or one drop of British blood be shed, to restore the antient despotism of France---that bitterest foe that England ever knew. Sooner than support such objects, or such a project, he would rather violate the proud feelings which he shared in common with the House, and petition for peace, with any concession, and almost by any sacrifice; but he trusted no such dilemma impended. The real object of the war was one thing---the fiery declaration which was to whet our valour was another. Mr. Sheridan now adverted to the strange situation in which the House might bring itself, by indulging and encouraging this furious spirit of declamation, against the meanness and infamy of holding any sort of treaty and intercourse with France. It was in the first place a libel on His Majesty's speech, and upon our own address. His Majesty had encouraged us to hope, that notwithstanding his armament, he might yet procure to us the blessing of peace; and we have thanked and encouraged him in his gra-



cious intention. How was this to be achieved? Disputes and cause of complaint existing, without some sort of communication, it was impossible. How was this to be carried on--- was there any sort of dumb crambo, by which the parties might come to understand each other; and yet the form of negotiation be kept from, and the moral dignity of Great Britain be preserved?

A right honourable gentleman, indeed, (Mr. Burke) had warned the House to be tender of advising His Majesty in the exercise of his prerogative; yet he himself had actually usurped the first prerogative of the Crown; and in contradiction to the King's express declaration, declared the nation to be actually at war; but what was to be said, if, after all this, the Minister, when returning to his seat in the House, should bring us the happy intelligence, that, in consequence of explanation and treaty, the calamities of war were actually averted! Mr. Sheridan asserted peremptorily, that, at the very moment in which the House was urged to a flame at the idea of our stooping to the contamination of treating with France, the Minister was actually negotiating, not only through Holland, but directly with agents from the French executive Council. Should his efforts be successful, observe how you must treat him on his return: if he should tell you that a temperate explanation has taken place; that the French had abandoned all idea of attacking our ally; that they have rescinded the incendiary decrees and declarations which had countenanced the disaffected in England, and that this peaceful and prosperous country might return to that state of applauded neutrality which we have just thanked His Majesty for adhering to, this we must answer, "Go, thou mean wretch, thou betrayer of the pride and dignity of the Crown and of the Nation, thou contaminated man, debased by intercourse with the agents of robbers, ruffians, murderers, and atheists—we only dissembled when we applauded your neutrality, we detest your peace, and we meant to dupe our Sovereign when we called on him to preserve it." Would the House make this answer, should such happy intelligence be brought them, and will they own that they played the hypocrite in their address to their King? Mr. Sheridan next took notice of the argument of the inutility of any negotiation, the French having ordered Dumourier to

open the Scheldt. He stated the dates, by which it appeared that that order was given before our declaration, that we would support the States General, could have been known in Paris. Why had no representation been made to France on that subject? A similar circumstance had occurred in 1785, when the Emperor seized the Scheldt. The determination of the French to support the Dutch, their then ally, was subsequently made known to him; negociation ensued, and he abandoned his project. Lastly, Mr. Sheridan stated the various grounds on which he thought if war must be the event, that preparations should be instant and vigorous. He then took notice of the sneer of an honourable gentleman, when he asked whether his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox) would be the Ambassador to Paris? He declared, that from the commencement of the revolution, he had been of opinion, that if there had been a Statesman-like Administration, they would have considered the post of Minister at Paris as the situation which demanded the first and ablest talents of the country. Happy, he believed, it would have been for both countries, and for human nature itself, if such had been the opinion of Government in this country; and highly as he valued his right honourable friend, unparalleled as he thought his talents were, he should not have hesitated to have declared, that as Minister in Paris there was scope and interest for the greatest mind that ever warmed a human bosom. The French had been uniformly partial, and even prejudiced, in favour of the English. What manly sense, what generous feeling, communicating with them, might have done, and above all, what fair truth and plain dealing might have effected, he believed it was not easy to calculate; but the withholding all these from that nation in our hollow neutrality, he was sure, was an error which would be for ever to be lamented. He concluded, with a reference to Lord Sheffield's declaration, that he was ashamed of the enthusiasm that he had once felt for Mr. Fox. This declaration he treated with the indignant zeal which friendship demanded. The according chorus of the noble band, who, in spite of the efforts of clamour and power, have surrounded the standard of the Champion of the Constitution, testified how little they valued the desertion of this noble Lord.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS replied in a short speech to Mr. Sheridan. In the discussion of the night, although it had gone into great length, he had heard nothing new, and want of novelty would seldom be complained of. When the honourable gentleman who spoke last rose, he thought all the arguments that were used had been fully answered on the former night; all the facts in the proclamation, and the speech from the throne, the House had already decided on. One assertion, that of a negotiation now depending, was of a nature which a Minister could not safely answer; because, whether he admitted or denied it, he disclosed what might be unfit to be disclosed. All therefore that he could say on the subject was, that the honourable gentleman's assertion was not compatible with his belief. Mr. Dundas repeated this in more guarded terms: "that, in his opinion, he believed that it was not compatible with his belief." With regard to the Ambassadors of other Courts remaining at Paris after the King was dethroned, he knew nothing of it; but he believed that the Dutch had observed the same conduct that the English Court did. To sum up the whole, he would put it on this issue: if, under the former government of France, while we had an Ambassador in France, and France an Ambassador here, the French Government had received persons from this country, complaining of the constitution, and proposing an alliance to subvert it, and given a favourable answer to such persons, what would have been the duty of His Majesty's Ministers? Would it not have been to recal our Ambassador, and order the French Ambassador to quit this country? How then could we now send an Ambassador to France, when the present French Government had notoriously done the very same thing?

Mr. FOX, with a hoarseness so severe as made it very difficult for him to speak at all, said it was physically impossible for him to say much, nor did he intend it. If I had thought, continued he, the circumstances such as the case stated by the right honourable Secretary, I would not have made my motion; but from His Majesty's speech and the address of the House in answer to it I was authorised to think otherwise. Would the right honourable Secretary in any case recall our Ambassador, and order the French Ambassador to leave this country before he had actually determined on war? I think he would not;

and that war is not yet determined on appears from this, that His Majesty from the throne has assured us that nothing will be neglected by him that can contribute to the important object of preserving the blessings of peace, and for this assurance we have returned thanks in our address. If I sent an Ambassador to France, I would not instruct him to petition, as some gentlemen are pleased to suppose, but to demand satisfaction, and if that were denied, to return. The chief point maintained by me in making this motion, is not that the people are always to be consulted on the expediency of going to war, but that on all occasions they ought to be truly informed what the subject of the war is. If my motion is not adopted, and war should ensue, I fear there will be much doubt about what is the true cause, and that some will think we are fighting for one thing, and some for another. The right honourable gentleman who has taken so warm and so able a part in this debate, asserts peremptorily that we are at war; and yet he voted for the address, thanking His Majesty for his endeavours to preserve the blessings of peace. He directly contradicts both the Ministers and the speech from the Throne. They praise his eloquence in their support, but take care not to adopt his opinions.—Whenever you do treat, and that you must treat some time or other nobody can deny, you must treat with the existing powers, and if you refuse to do that now, which you know must be done at some time or other, you give away the opportunity of saving Holland from a war, of preserving to her the monopoly of the Scheldt without a war, and of obtaining the revocation of that resolution of the executive Council, of which I perhaps think as ill as you do.

If the point in dispute be, whether we shall negotiate by a Minister, or by means of secretaries communicating with Ministers, I do not think that a sufficient cause of war. I have done my duty in submitting my ideas to the House, and in doing this, I could have no other motives than those of public duty. What were my motives? It was not to court the favour of Ministers, or those by whom Ministers are supposed to be favoured; it was not to gratify my friends, as the debates in this House have shewn; it was not to court popularity; for the general conversation both within and without these walls has shewn, that to gain popularity, I must have held the oppo-

its course. The people may treat my house, as they did that of Dr. Priestley—as it is said, they have more recently done that of Mr. Walker. My motive only was, that they might know what was the real cause of the war into which they are likely to be plunged, and that they might know it was a matter of mere form and ceremonial.

Mr. DRAKE, jun. declared, that at this awful and portentous crisis of affairs, he could not give a silent vote, without expressing, before God and his country, the indignation he felt at the introduction of a subject fraught with the most baneful consequences to the liberty, the honour, the tranquillity, and the independence of Britain. Gentlemen on the other side of the House, in the course of this discussion, had evinced an indecent exultation at the abolition of monarchy in France, and the subsequent calamities which every man of feeling ought to lament and abhor. The only benefit that could accrue to this country from that event, was the dissolution of the Family Compact. But, alas! that advantage was absorbed in the alarming extension of the territories of the French Republic, which, if recognized by us, would excite the resentment of every power in Europe, and pave the way to render Great Britain a province of France. Was not this the time for Englishmen to join heart and hand in maintaining our independence and supporting our importance in the political scale of Europe? They had likewise exulted in another event, which ought rather to be a subject of condolence and regret, namely, the retreat of the combined armies, whose leaders were actuated by the laudable motives of humanity, whose object was to stop the effusion of blood, and prevent those excesses incident to a ferocious people, who had thrown off all restraint of Government, and relinquished every social and moral obligation, and reverted to a state of nature, of anarchy, and confusion! He next described the men who composed the legislative and executive Government of France, and reprobated the idea of sending a Minister to negotiate with rebels, assassins, and regicides, whose ambition seemed stimulated by rapine, havoc, and devastation. With such a junto, a Member of the British House of Commons had hardihood to propose an embassy, which always implied a parity of manners, and a reciprocity of interest. He would ask the right honourable gentleman, who would go

upon this diplomatic expedition? No man that was loyal to his King, and faithful to his country, would undertake an embassy to which so much danger and responsibility was attached; for sure he was, that a disparity of political sentiments would expose any person of that description to the ferocity of a licentious mob, who might perhaps imbrue their hands in his blood before they permitted him to deliver his credentials to those immaculate gentlemen who were placed at the helm of affairs in France. Indeed the subject in discussion appeared to him

“ ——— A Monster, of such frightful mien,  
“ That to be hated, needs but to be seen.”

And in justice to the right honourable mover, he was inclined to believe he was not sincere in his intentions; for the old adage *Par pari gaudet*, was not unfrequently applicable to the rational as well as to the brute creation.

In addressing himself to the opposite side of the House, he broke out in a most severe invective against the gentlemen who had supported the motion, and in the most emphatic terms conjured his honourable, ever honourable, and right honourable friends, to unite heart, head and hand in suppressing and extirpating the very semen of a revolution, which was but too manifest in the volcanic, subterranean, infernal, diabolical eloquence of his inimical friends who---[Here a peal of laughter.] The honourable Member insisted that he had been interrupted in one of the most essential privileges of a British Senator, viz. the freedom of speech, which he hoped the Speaker had not to demand of His Majesty in the present session of Parliament: and if it had been obtained, he in common with other Members, had a right to avail himself of it. In order to conciliate the attention of the House, he lamented that it was necessary for Members to detail their political creed.---Whatever that of others might be, his was, “ Loyalty to my King, fidelity to my country, and love to the constitution.” The honourable Member declared, that if by theatrical gesticulation he had betrayed an excess of animation, it was but the ebullition of his heart, which obliged him to exclaim with Hamlet, that he had

———— “ that within which passeth show,  
“ These but the trappings---this the seat of woe.”

The subject matter in debate was of vast importance, and struck to the heart of every patriotic Englishman, whose reason was unruffled by passion, unclouded by prejudice, and unwarped by party. For his part, he was an insolated man, who thought the cause of his country paramount to every other concern; he therefore trusted, that gentlemen would impute his animation to a zeal for the good of his country, which neither hope nor fear could influence him to suppress.

The question was then put and negatived.

Notice was given that the motion of Lord Fielding, for the suspension of the Habeas-Corpus Act, was postponed till after the holidays.

Mr. GREY gave notice, that he should move, in consequence of the disgraceful riots at Manchester, to put the whole of His Majesty's subjects equally under the safeguard of the law.

Mr. DUNDAS thought the honourable gentleman might save himself the trouble; for he understood that persons of every description, resident in England, were equally under the protection of the law.

The House adjourned.

*Monday, 17th December.*

Mr. Burke moved, "that the House do resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House to consider of a supply to be granted to His Majesty."

The House resolved itself accordingly; Mr. Hobart in the chair.

On the motion of Mr. Rose, the Committee resolved, "that a supply be granted to His Majesty." The House ordered the report to be received to-morrow.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS observed, that as the treaty of peace concluded by Lord Cornwallis with Tippoo Saib was not upon the table, the House could not officially know any thing of it; for this reason he should defer the motion he had to make until Wednesday next.

Sir JOHN JARVIS gave notice, that it was his intention to bring forward a motion for the relief of wounded and superannuated seamen. Many of these men were in the greatest misery and want; and notwithstanding they had, generally

speaking, passed the survey which qualifies them for a reception into Greenwich Hospital, still the house not being able to receive them, they were in a manner abandoned by their country. He thought that all such should be entitled to an out-pension. Provided a Lord of the Admiralty would bring forward a motion for the relief of these neglected sufferers, he would abandon his intention; he would otherwise bring it forward on Thursday next.

Mr. GREY, in consequence of notice given on Saturday, rose to make his promised motion. He began by saying, that in a former debate Mr. Dundas had taken fire at an insinuation he had made, that the protection of the laws was not extended equally to all His Majesty's subjects. So far, however, from receding from that insinuation, he begged to be understood, that he meant to substitute now assertion for insinuation. He was decidedly of opinion that the protection of the laws was not equally extended to all persons. In support of his opinion he adduced the riots at Birmingham, into the causes of which no inquiry had been suffered to take place. In the present instance, if Administration created an alarm, if at the same time that alarm was occasioned by a general description held out, that there were persons disaffected to the Constitution; if such a general description, too, were made for the express purpose of subjecting particular persons to the vengeance of the People, he conceived that he was fully justified in the assertion he had made. Several facts had been stated to justify the proclamation; these were all denied. At Dundee the tumults were over ten days before the issuing of the proclamation; besides it was plain that Government did not assemble the militia to suppress them, for if they had, the militia would not have been drawn towards London. Those tumults being suppressed without the interference of the military, he contended that the Minister had abused the term of insurrection, and had been guilty of perverting an act of Parliament. If he had conceived that riots would break out, he ought to have assembled the Parliament, and have claimed a bill of indemnity. He had not pursued this mode, because it was his interest to create alarm and excite apprehension. If there really existed disaffected persons, they should be pointed out and punished.

Riots, he understood, had taken place at Cambridge. Very



serious tumults had occurred at Manchester: these seemed to proceed from a meeting held at Manchester on the 11th instant, for the purpose of preserving constitutional order. The same evening a mob had assembled, and had attacked the house of Mr. Walker. An honourable gentleman whom he saw in his place (Mr. Peele) was present at that meeting. In one of the daily papers it was stated, that he said, in his address to the meeting, that it was time for the People to rouse from their lethargy, for there were incendiaries in the country. If Mr. Peele really did speak these words, he called upon him as a man to say who those incendiaries were.

He had heard that an express had arrived from Manchester this day, which stated, that the populace had risen again, and had destroyed the houses of Messrs. Cooper and Walker. At Birmingham, also, symptoms of riots had been evinced.

These effects seemed to him to have proceeded from a publication, issuing from the Association at the Crown-and-Anchor Tavern: it was called "A Pennyworth of Truth\*." He

\* The following is a copy of the publication to which Mr. Grey here alludes, and which furnished the subject of his motion :

## ONE PENNYWORTH OF TRUTH,

FROM

THOMAS BULL to his Brother JOHN.

Dear Brother,

THERE has always been such a good understanding between us, that you and I can speak our minds freely to one another. Our father, you know, always maintained the character of a blunt, honest, sensible man; and our mother was as good a sort of woman as ever lived. They gave us the best teaching they could afford, and the neighbours have never counted us fools: but some people are taking great pains to make us so, and rogues into the bargain. They have tried their skill upon me, and so they will upon you; but I write you this letter to give you warning, that you may look to yourself: for it seems, John, you and I are now to learn every thing from those conceited monkies the French. Nobody knows any thing now but they, and some Englishmen at home, who hate this country as bad as the French do. With talking about right and equality, and constitution and organization, and such like, they made my head turn round; but I see now pretty well what they mean.

They begin with telling us, all mankind are equal: but that's a lye, John; for the children are not equal to the mother, nor the mother to the father, unless where there is petticoat government; and such families never go on well — the children are often spoiled,

had sent for it to the Crown and Anchor, and was told that it was delivered to none but subscribers, but was to be had at Stockdale's — a proof that they avowed the publication. It contained some most unfounded and libellous invectives against the Dissenters, whom it charged with having been the authors of the American war, and of the consequent taxes. Mr. Paine's Rights of Man had not produced one riot; but this invective against the Dissenters seemed calculated to produce effects the most alarming.

If Government did not put a speedy termination to these proceedings, he was convinced that that great man, Dr. Priestley, and every other Dissenter, would not be safe.

and the husband brought to a jail. But, I say, people are not equal. The clerk is not equal to the parson; the footman is not equal to the squire; the thief at the bar is not equal to the judge upon the bench. If it were, as they say, then, the clerk might get up into the pulpit; the footman might sit at the top of the table; the thief might take his place upon the bench, and try the judge; and the coachman might get into the coach, and set his master on the box, who, not knowing how to drive, 'tis ten to one but he overturns him. Pretty work we should have with their equality; but let us have patience, and go on with them.

You and I were taught that God governs the world, and that nobody has any power in it but such as he gives them; there is no power but of God; and our Saviour allowed it even in Pontius Pilate, the Roman judge. But you are to believe now, out of the French Bible, that all power is of the people, that is, of you and I, Thomas and John Bull. But if the people, in any great national question of difficulty, which is very possible, should be divided into two halves, who are the people then, John? They that lay hold of the sword first, and get to be strongest, will always call themselves the people, and the rest must go to be hanged, or lose their heads. If you and I should quarrel about our rights, and there were no law above us, then there's People Thomas against People John, and we must settle it by a civil war; for when there's no law, there's nothing left but the sword or the halter to settle all differences: so I must cut your throat, or you must cut mine. This is what always comes of the power of the people, as it is now in France, where all questions have been carried by cutting off heads, and hanging people upon lamp-irons; and then, you know, they that are hanged can give no vote, and they that are left are all of a mind. But, however, they are as far off from being settled now as they were four years ago; and one of their new Kings (Marat) said they must have two hundred and eighty thousand more heads off before they should be right.

Now for their wise notions about Government. As all power is in the people, they say there can be no lawful government but what the people make. When all power is taken from those who are no

As to the respectable person (Dr. Priestley) who has been made the object of so much popular indignation and ministerial hatred, whose character does honour to human nature, and whose works do not contain a single principle hostile to Government; this gentleman is kept in a continual state of alarm: his servants, with difficulty, are prevailed upon to stay with him, fearing lest they should fall a sacrifice to popular outrages. He obtained a verdict for his losses and damages 2000*l.* less than the amount of them: he was not yet paid: application was made to Government to enforce it, and Government deliberated on the subject. He said, when Dissenters went in Warwickshire to complain to a certain Magistrate, it was his custom to ask them if they read seditious pub-

entitled to it by law, and put into the hands of the mob, armed with pikes and daggers, that's a Constitution, John. Then out of this the said mob raises what they call organs and functions, and makes a government; but they have been at it in France for four years, and though they have worked very hard sometimes, they have hardly got to the beginning yet. And now have you not sense enough to see what a fine contrivance this is for plundering every gentleman of his property, his house, his land, his goods, and his money, under a pretence that every thing belongs to the nation? And it holds as well, or better, against churches, than against private houses. They tell you farther, that no man has a right to any thing but what he earns himself: so if you and I, John and Thomas Bull, work ever so hard, and leave what we have to bring up our children in the world, they will have no right to it, because they did not earn it themselves. This notion cuts off all right of inheritance, which is the most sacred upon earth, and without which it would not be worth while either to work or to live; for the Nation may meet, make a new Government, and take it all away at a stroke.—I'll tell you a story:—Some while ago a highwayman met with his death upon the road for demanding a gentleman's money—“That fellow,” said a wag, “was a good patriot; who, supposing the gentleman might have more money in his pocket than he had earned, discovered that it was the property of the nation: so, making himself the nation, he only demanded his own property. But the gentleman, being rather too quick for him, shot the nation through the head, and spoiled the new principles of government.”—This was bad luck: that man might have lived to have given us a continuation of Thomas Paine.—And now, John, I'll tell thee plainly, this new notion of government from the mob is the foolishhest, as well as the most rascally, that ever entered into the world; and the very people, that have raised themselves to power and plunder by it, will be fools enough to deny it. They will be telling us presently how God has fought for the French against the Prussians and Austrians, while they don't believe there's a God in the world.

lications, and make them take an oath to that effect before he would do his duty. He wished Ministers would take the same pains, and display the same activity in the punishment of riots which have actually happened, as they have in pretended ones. He read several extracts from the paper, and concluded with moving in form, "That this paper be now received and read." This was to ground a motion of address to the King to give directions to the Attorney General to prosecute.

The MASTER OF THE ROLLS objected to the reading of the paper, upon what appeared as yet. He wished particu-

Let us hear next what they have to say about Kings. We are shortly to have no more of them, neither *below* nor *above*; *Tom Paine* having been heard to declare, that when he had made revolutions against the Kings upon earth, he would try his hand at a *Revolution in Heaven!* You see, John, who they are that talk against Kings; they never fail to talk against God Almighty; and in such words as the Devils of Hell dare not utter! When they pretend to argue with us, they tell us, all Kings are bad; that God never made a King, and that all Kings are very expensive. But that all Kings are bad, cannot be true, because God himself is one of them: he calls himself *King of Kings*; which not only shews us he is a King, but that he has *other Kings under him*: he is never called *King of Republics*. The scripture calls Kings *the Lord's anointed*; but whoever heard of an anointed republic? There are now, Brother John, many thousands of Frenchmen, who have taken to themselves that power which belonged to their King: Where shall we get oil enough to anoint them all? And what would they be when we had done? They would not be the Lord's anointed; they would be the *mob's anointed*: and there is little doubt but that, proud as they are at present, somebody will *anoint* them well at last.

That God never made a King is a great lye; when we hear him telling us in his own words—*Yet have I set my King upon my holy hill of Sion*. Did not our Saviour say he was *King of the Jews*; and was not he crucified for saying so? The Jews who crucified him have never had a King of their own from that day to this: not because they dislike a King, but because they are not good enough to have one. They are the only nation upon earth that ever were or ever will be in a state of equality: and it has been a great and mighty work of God to make them so. No power can make men equals, but that which makes men Kings. And what should we get by it? We should be just where the Jews are; a proverb to all nations; a monument of the divine wrath: and a disgrace to the world.

*Kings are very expensive things*, said the Presbyterians at Birmingham, when they were going to make their French-Revolution dinner.

That may be true, Brother John: but if Kings keep us from such miseries as the *want of a King* has produced in France, they

lar parts to be pointed out before he could agree to have a motion grounded on it.

The SPEAKER said, the question now before the House is, Whether the paper should be read?

Mr. PEELE said, he found himself particularly called upon to speak, having been addressed in a particular manner. He conceived that a newspaper paragraph was no foundation on which to criminate a Member of that House. With regard to what was attributed to him in the paper alluded to, he disclaimed it all, except his having said God save the King; and,

deserve to be well maintained, let them be who they will. When there is *no King*, then every man *does that which is right in his own eyes*; and mind, John, not in the eyes of *any body else*; and you may see in your bible, how people were given up to murder, and how sixty-five thousand of them presently fell in battle, because there was nobody at that time set over them. Look about you, like a man of sense, and you will soon see that bad subjects cost more money than good Kings. \* “Our national debt, for which we are now paying such heavy taxes, was doubled by the troubles in *America*, all brought upon us from the beginning by the Dissenters there and here. Did not Dr. *Price* write for them? And did not the Birmingham Doctor (late one of the Kings elect of France) encourage them, and write mob-principles of Government to justify them?” Yet these people, who brought our burdens upon us, are they that rail most at the expensiveness of our Government, and use it as a handle for overturning it: just like the Devil, who drives men into sin, and then gets them damned for it, if he can; and then he is pleased, because he delights to be the author of misery: that is his *greatness*: and some people have no notion of *any other*: so they massacre poor Priests; rob and plunder their country and their Church; put Kings and Queens in prison; and then sing *ca Ira*, for joy that *Hell is broke loose*!

I have nothing more to say (till my next letter) but that the Government which is most wicked, be the form of it what it will, is generally the weakest in itself, and the most expensive to the people: and so, after all that can be said, *honesty is the best policy*, and the *honest* man is the best *subject*. Keep this in your mind, brother John; and farewell——From your loving brother,

THOMAS BULL.

P. S. Perhaps they may tell thee, John, that thou hast nothing to lose, and that any change may be to thy advantage; but thou hast a *body* and a *soul*: and if thy body goes to the gallows, and thy soul to the Devil, won't that be a *loss*, John?

\* This passage is omitted in the publication avowed by the Association at the Crown and Anchor.

for his part, he had always avoided every thing incendiary in any shape or form whatsoever. The Association he belonged to at Manchester, alluded to in that paper, was a most respectable meeting of men of independent principles; every man in it spoke his sentiments, and nothing but sentiments of loyalty were uttered. When he left the town all was quiet; and he regretted that the people afterwards broke into disorder. The honourable gentleman (Mr. Grey) had insinuated, that the riots were occasioned by the Association. He would read a paper to convince the House [here he read printed resolutions of the Committee, declaratory of their intentions to prosecute rioters of any denomination] that the objects of the Association were, to protect the laws, and to discourage any attempts to break in on the civil order of society. There were, he confessed, in Manchester, some few disaffected; but in general they were contented, happy, and attached to their Government and Constitution. They were alarmed to find that there were enemies at home corresponding with enemies abroad to bring down this flourishing country. The common people are better judges of things than they are supposed to be. French writings and Paine's writings, and all the writings and doctrines of Paine's friends, have had no effect on them. He had many workmen—Paine's book was put into their hands, and to his knowledge they reasoned thus upon it:—"Equality is impossible—Are we to change our condition for that of Frenchmen?—Two shillings a day for eight pence?—Warm clothes for broken breeches?—and plenty of wholesome beef for frogs?—No; we will have no such fellowship with them."—He said he felt the most sincere satisfaction in having it in his power to declare, that such a useful body of men, from whose labours and industry the country received such abundant benefits, had but one sentiment, and that was loyalty, attachment to their lawful governors, and veneration for the Constitution. As to the Association, he could only say, that one gentleman owed his safety to them: they surrounded his person, and protected him: it was indecent, therefore, to charge to their account any of the tumults in Manchester. Gentlemen endeavoured to make two distinct bodies of men in the country; but the People know that there is but one interest, and that their industry is their happiness.

In this they were right ; for some of them, he was bold to say, had better incomes from their industry than many of the new-created Kings of France. As to party among them, there was once a division --- one side called Pittites, and the other Foxites ; but that had ceased : they have all coalesced, and call themselves Kingites !

Mr. ADAM rejoiced to hear, on such respectable authority, that the lower class of people had too much good sense to suffer their attachment to the Constitution to be shaken by any writings. It was a fresh proof that there was no tendency among them to insurrection, for the purpose of overturning the Constitution. But he could not suffer any insinuation to pass unrefuted, that the same class of people in the North of Great Britain were not as well affected to the Constitution as those in the South. He knew them to be so, and challenged any man to prove the contrary. He rejoiced to see, that by their intercourse with the People of England the spirit of liberty was rapidly advancing among the People of Scotland ; but it was the spirit of true liberty---the liberty of the British Constitution. Let it not, therefore, be said, that any spirit of licentiousness was cherished among them ; nor let any such reason be alledged, at any subsequent period of the session, for resisting their application to Parliament for the reform of such abuses, and the redress of such grievances, as they meant to apply for, and had a right to expect. He enforced the necessity of the motion, and expressed his doubts about the legality of the associations that were entered into for the purpose of prosecuting seditious writings. If the law was enforced as it ought to be, such associations would be unnecessary. He was sure this sort of assistance to Government was not right, for it tended to establish what we blamed so much in France—a Government by Clubs.

Mr. YORK said a few words against the motion.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL said, that as he must receive the commands of the House, or of His Majesty, he never gave an opinion upon these subjects ; all he wished to say was, that it was not possible for even a professional man to say whether such a paper as this was or was not a libel, without reading it attentively in his closet, and reflecting on the context for several hours. He entreated the House to consider two

points. It was possible it would turn out to be no libel, and it was possible, if it was a libel, that there would be no conviction. In either case the dignity of the House would suffer.

Mr. JEKYLL declared himself in favour of the motion.

Mr. ANSTRUTHER said, it was strange that gentlemen should come to the House, to obtain its sanction for prosecuting a seditious paper, while they contended that it was illegal for ten or twenty individuals to associate for prosecuting seditious writings. He defended the legality of these associations, of one of which he was a member.

Mr. LAMBTON said it was necessary that libels, against whole descriptions of men, should be prosecuted, as well as libels against the Government, that evil-disposed persons might not learn to think that the reputation or the property of any particular set of men might be attacked with impunity. He complained of calumnies of a dangerous nature, circulated against himself and his friends in the county which he had the honour to represent.

Mr. GREGOR conjured Mr. Grey to withdraw his motion ; and added, that some of the opinions lately maintained by Mr. Fox were highly dangerous, although perhaps Mr. Fox did not understand them to be so ; and said, that if called upon to do so, he would point them out.

Mr. FOX said, it would ill become him to interrupt a business before the House, by calling for a debate on his own opinions ; but if the honourable gentleman, or the House, chose to appoint a time for examining his opinions, he was ready to meet the discussion, and to thank them for it, confident that it would only afford him an opportunity of removing misconception, or clearing himself from misrepresentation. There were certain forms and phrases which at present every gentleman who rose to speak was required to repeat ; all these, whether Church and State, or God Save the King, or any thing else, he begged to be understood as having said or sung. As those who had read Italian operas, might recollect to have seen prefixed an advertisement by the author, that when he introduced the names of the heathen gods and goddesses, he meant nothing against the holy Catholic religion ; so he must advertise the House, that when he made use of the words Liberty, Equality, Impartiality, he used them only in the true sense of the British con-



stitution, and not as understood, or supposed to be understood in any other country whatever. This was the more necessary, as the first thing he had to do, was to implore them to be equal and impartial ; for it was not for the dignity of the Government or the House to prosecute seditious publications on one side, and pass by those on the other. He had always advised never to connect riots and insurrections with seditious writings, and to repress and punish the criminal acts. His advice was not followed ; libels on one side were connected with acts and prosecuted ; if the same course was not pursued with respect to libels on the other, there was neither impartiality nor equality. For how stood the facts ; libels against the constitution had been published, but no riot had followed these libels, no mob had taken the Rights of Man for their watch-word ; yet these libels had been prosecuted. Libels against the Dissenters had been published, riots had ensued, directed solely against the Dissenters, of which Church and King was the signal, and none of these libels were prosecuted. Were the Dissenters in this respect equally protected ? Had they not a right to say, “ You give every thing to the imaginary fears of others, and “ nothing to our real sufferings.” He paid a handsome compliment to the worth and character of Mr. Walker, who, he said, entertained opinions about the constitution, of which he did not approve ; but that was no reason for withdrawing his good opinion, while his life and conduct were irreproachable. It was their duty to take into their minds, not toleration, but that on which toleration was founded, sympathy for human infirmity and human error, and to recollect that those who differed from us might be right, although we could not see it.--- He expressed his doubts of the legality of the associations and subscriptions for criminal prosecutions—not of those for aiding the civil Magistrate in suppressing riot or insurrection. Of one of this sort he should be ready to become a Member, and to assist the Magistrate in person if necessary, for it was the duty of every man to do so. Such associations might do good if there was danger, and could only excite a little unnecessary alarm if there was none. But these associations were at present made an instrument of tyranny over men’s minds, almost as bad as the clubs in France, that went about, as often as they thought fit, requiring men to renew their civic oath on pain of

proscription for incivism. Papers were handed about for signatures, and the names of those who signed, and of those who did not, were taken down with the mark of incivism fixed on the latter. To such persons in the lower ranks of life as had consulted him, he had said, “ I shall sign none of these papers, “ those who offer them will probably do me no harm ; but you “ they will deprive of your customers or your employers, and “ therefore whether you think them useful associations, or “ idle, I advise you to sign them.” He remarked on various inflammatory hand-bills, circulated under pretext of calling meetings, and mentioned one for a meeting at Staines, concluding with—“ Destruction to Fox and all his Jacobin crew.” Now it so happened, that his house was within three or four miles of Staines, and perhaps it might have been the purpose of the author of the bill to serve his house as it been attempted to serve Mr. Walker’s. Of this however he was not much afraid ; for although misrepresentation had often made him unpopular, where he was not known, he had the good fortune never to have been unpopular in his own neighbourhood. He exhorted the House by adopting the motion, or by some resolution, declaring their equal disapprobation of riots on all pretexts, to save the country from the possible disgrace of driving a body possessing such talents, such industry, such arts, such invariable loyalty to the House of Brunswick, as the Dissenters, to emigration.

Mr. WINDHAM replied to Mr. Fox. The House had directed no prosecutions on either side, and therefore could not be charged with partiality. The law was equally open in all cases. The indignation excited against Mr. Walker, was much more fairly imputable to his political opinions, than to his being a Dissenter. It was natural and even justifiable for men, to feel indignation against those who promulgated doctrines, threatening all that was valuable and dear in society ; and if there were not means of redress by law, even violence would be justifiable. But we had laws, therefore violence ought to be punished ; and on this ground he defended the associations, as tending to prevent violence by giving vigour to the law.

Mr. Serjeant WATSON began with praising the Dissenters, whom he described as men possessing the most zealous at-

tachment to the laws and constitution of this country; he therefore thought them entitled to every indulgence and protection compatible with the laws of good Government. However the mode and form of their Government might differ from those of the established Church, none of His Majesty's subjects could possibly be more respectable, or more loyal, as they had taken frequent occasions to evince. With respect to the various associations which had been lately formed, for the preservation of peace and good order, he considered them not only as justifiable, but commendable in the highest degree, since their purpose was to assist the civil Magistrates in the execution of the laws, a purpose very different from that which had been alledged by certain honourable gentlemen on the other side the House.

Mr. HAWKINS BROWNE was decidedly of opinion, that the paper in question ought not to be prosecuted by that House. He thought the associations highly necessary at the present moment, and that very beneficial effects had already been found to result from them; they had even gone so far as to influence favourably the public funds.

Mr. MONTAGUE was surprized that the honourable Member who brought forward the present motion, should place so nearly and explicit a confidence in the authority of newspapers, and what was stated from them, whilst at the same time he paid so little attention to the superior and very substantial evidence which had been adduced by gentlemen on the other side the House.

Mr. MITFORD declared himself as friendly as any man could be to universal toleration; but in his opinion it would be impossible to make a proposition more inimical to the peace and good Government of this country, than the present one, since it was impossible at this time to separate religious from political opinions. He therefore thought, that until these religious and political opinions shall cease to be united, it became him pertinaciously to resist this motion, which cast a marked reflection on those who were charged with the executive administration of the Government, by attributing to them a partiality for certain descriptions of people, simply on account of their religious persuasion. The Church of England was, and he trusted would long continue, a great majority, when

compared with the various persuasions of Dissenters; and the provocations given by the latter to the Members of the established Church, by a variety of publications calculated to make much ill blood and animosity, obliged the Churchmen, however unwillingly, to shew that they were the majority. With respect to the parochial as well as other associations, at the present critical juncture, when a considerable alarm had gone abroad, he considered them as promising to be attended by numerous advantages, and was astonished that on any ground an objection could be stated to them.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, all that had been repeated about the riots at Birmingham, had been fully answered in the debates of last session. Of the riot at Manchester, he had received information by a letter, which he read, delivered to him at twelve o'clock on Friday night; and although the writer was unknown to him, he immediately inclosed it in a letter to the Magistrates, directing them to exert every means in their power to suppress any riot, and to send to him such informations respecting it as they had been able to take. No neglect was imputable to him; he had always declared, and shewn by his conduct, that he thought a riot totally unjustifiable on any pretext. He defended the associations for prosecuting seditious writings as legal, and instanced the societies for prosecuting swindlers and house-breakers. He recommended it to Mr. Fox to consider the advice he had given about signing papers, for according to that doctrine, a Magistrate might think himself sure of the support of a great number of persons, who when occasion called would refuse to aid him, and much mischief might ensue. Men who signed papers, of which they disapproved, might soon learn to swear what they did not believe; and the signatures of traitors might appear among those of good citizens. No sufficient ground had been laid for receiving and reading the paper, and therefore he should oppose the motion.

Mr. FOX said, he kept no such company as the right honourable Secretary talked of. He conversed with no men who would refuse to aid the civil Magistrate; and he had no advice to give to traitors, except to become good subjects. All that he had said was, that when papers and declarations were offered to men in the way of test, containing nothing of which

they positively disapproved but only what they thought unnecessary or useless: and when their refusing to sign such papers would bring upon them a sort of proscription to the great injury of their property, if not danger to their persons, his advice was to sign them; and a stronger necessity would even justify them in signing that of which they did disapprove.

Mr. D. SCOTT, after a modest apology, expressed his conviction, that it was the duty of every Member of Parliament, in the present crisis, to bring forward whatever information might tend to illustrate the important subject before them. He was of opinion, that it would be most prudent to treat the paper under discussion with the most perfect indifference and neglect. He had seen hundreds of such papers, addressed to the lower orders of the people, containing the most seditious advice; they died away without notice or noise, through their own insignificance. If noticed, or punished, they might have derived an interest and importance that did not naturally belong to them. Mr. Scott supposed, that all such papers flowed from the *soi-disant* friends of the people. Those multitudes of papers incited all orders of people, the lowest mechanics and day-labourers not excepted, to unite their exertions for the purpose of reforming the Parliament, of the corruption of which, it was supposed, there could be little doubt, as it was declared by its own Members both in and out of the House of Commons. Never imagining that so novel and extraordinary a question as the present could be brought into discussion, he had not brought several papers to the House, (which, had he had any idea of such a question, he would have done) fraught with the most seditious matter, and evidently intended to subvert our excellent constitution, and bring us into a state of anarchy, confusion, and horror, similar to those that now agitated and distracted a neighbouring empire. However, as one of these papers happened to be in his pocket, he would, with the indulgence of the House, read a part of it.— [Here Mr. Scott read a part of that paper, which appeared to have been circulated in Scotland in November last, and was signed by William Christie, John Smart, and others.] Those persons, he said, made no scruple to avow their having signed it, and that they corresponded with similar clubs, and canvassed industriously for additional members. This paper, Mr.

Scott said, was by no means so violent as many others : it only invited all householders and heads of families residing in the country, without exception, including farmers, merchants, tradesmen, and day-labourers, to new-model the constitution, by insisting on annual Parliaments, instead of septennial, and a few other such trifling amendments.

The paper farther acquainted those to whom it was addressed, that the only reason which could be given against this measure was, that Parliament was thus constituted at the Revolution ; but this, say the Society, can be no good reason to men of sense, because the country has altered since then in many points, and so should the constitution.

Mr. Scott added, that though the authors of this paper could have been immediately produced, he had never thought of bringing them under the notice of Parliament, because they were not of sufficient consequence to be noticed, either in character or situation in life. Whatever might come from such obscure and wrong-headed, absurd men, must, among a people generally industrious, prosperous, contented, and of sound common sense, on the whole, be very harmless. Had any seditious papers, drawn up with that imposing air which ability and eloquence can inspire, or high character and consequence come to his knowledge, he should have thought it his duty to bring them under the cognizance of a Court of Law.

The paper from Thomas Bull to John Bull, he had read, but could not discover any thing of a seditious nature : on the contrary, he thought it contained much wholesome advice, conveyed in language the most adapted to the capacities and modes of thinking of those to whom it was addressed. Of those papers that were in question, he observed two that were nearly similar ; but neither of them, for seditious design, was to be compared with that from Scotland, a part of which he had just read.

Mr. Scott now entered on another topic ; but which was, at the same time, strictly connected with the main subject of conversation and debate. It had been asserted, that the late riots had never had any other existence than in the minds of Ministers, who had spread an alarm of insurrections without reason, and for private ends ; and, as an instance of false alarm, an

honourable gentleman had mentioned the case of the riots at Dundee ; and also of the causes that were given by the authors and abettors of those disorders.

The mob at Dundee, it had been asserted by an honourable gentleman, was composed of only " a few schoolboys, not " one of whom exceeded sixteen years of age, who amused " themselves for a few hours with the tree of liberty." This account, no doubt, proceeded from wrong information ; for Mr. Scott was clearly of opinion, that the honourable gentleman was incapable of mistating facts, unless mistated to him.

When Mr. Scott was lately in the North, on seeing a number of seditious pamphlets and papers in circulation, and the great industry used to corrupt the minds of the people, he had used every exertion in his power to trace the causes of the people's discontent, that a road might be opened towards a remedy. He found, that there were several societies of such inconsiderable people as appeared in the paper in his hand, who had been misled, as they acquainted him, by others, styling themselves Friends of the People. They said, that there were several Members of the House of Commons, who, they understood, had declared the Parliament corrupt, and had invited all people to unite in reforming it.

There were, however, no riots, until he left Scotland ; and the first of any consequence appeared at Dundee. Dundee was a manufacturing town in the county which he had the honour to represent, and contained above twenty thousand inhabitants : a manufacturing and commercial people, flourishing in a well-regulated, ingenious, and prosperous industry, as the towns and villages in Angus generally did. It became his duty to be particularly attentive to what passed in that county ; he had accordingly corresponded regularly with the magistrates of all the boroughs, and the best-informed gentlemen in that country. He had received, during the agitation of the riots, daily reports, which he had kept. If he should be wrong in any point of his information, the right honourable Secretary of State, who was then in Scotland, and who had also taken care to have daily reports, and these now in the Secretary of State's office, would be able to set him right. The riot at Dundee began on a Friday, and ended on the Tuesday following. At the height, it

consisted of about six hundred rioters, not boys, but from sixteen years of age to sixty. The Magistrates behaved with proper firmness and vigour : this, with the timely aid of the country gentlemen, after a few days, restored peace and good order. However, soon after, fresh symptoms of riot made it necessary to call in a military force, and all had since been quiet. In the county of Angus, a very great majority of even the lower orders of the people were industrious, orderly, and happy, particularly in the town of Montrose, which, from the restless efforts of insignificant individuals, boasting, like the fly on the wheel, of the dust they kick up, had often been represented in the public papers as in a state little short of insurrection. The few malcontents at Montrose, Mr. Scott assured the House, were of the lowest class ; nor had any man of reputation and influence appeared to head them, but dregs of the people, without a single man of character to countenance them. But when Mr. Scott passed through Glasgow, he was exceedingly sorry to learn, that men of a higher order had volunteered in these unconstitutional societies ; men from whose situations in life, and abilities, he should have hoped for every exertion in favour of peace, tranquillity, and order, he was grieved to find, had encouraged these innovations, so destructive of all order. That there might be room for reform in ours, as in the best actual constitutions, no man could doubt ; but that the British constitution, of King, Lords, and Commons, as it now stands, united more benefits and blessings to all those who had the good fortune to live under its benign influence, than any other constitution that had ever appeared in history, he conceived no man would deny.

If the “ Friends of the People,” or rather enemies of the People, would maturely consider these blessings, and at the same time hold in view the unhappy distractions in France, where daily instances of the most atrocious crimes occur, surely they would see, that this particular period, of all others, was the most unfit for innovation. If, however, they should obstinately continue to spread their pernicious doctrines, what punishment might they not sooner or later expect, perhaps the greatest of all curses on earth—Banishment to France? He did not say he wished this, for such a wish would be to wish them misery in extreme.



Mr. Scott then adverted to the attack made upon the constitutional societies, which had been so much reprobated on the other side of the House.

He belonged himself to several of them : he had encouraged them here, and recommended them in all parts of the country where he corresponded, as being, in his opinion, the most constitutional and effectual means of effacing the impressions made by the seditious papers which had been circulated, and the doctrines that had been propagated.

The effects of those societies had been rapid and wonderful, all His Majesty's subjects must have felt this, and none more so than those in this city—The stocks, which might be considered as the criterion of public opinion, had fallen precipitately for about a week ; but no sooner did those constitutional societies shew themselves, than the stocks rose in a gradual progression, and now seem in a fair train to rise to the level of our great national prosperity.

Colonel MACLEOD said, that he felt himself particularly called upon to trouble the House for a few minutes, as an honourable gentleman on the other side, with whom he had long lived in habits of intimate friendship, but whose friendship seemed now to be in the wane, had endeavoured to do away a statement of a fact which he had made two nights before, and which fact had been often quoted in the subsequent debates.—He was in the recollection of the House, that the right honourable Secretary, in detailing what he called the insurrections in Scotland, had laid particular stress on a circumstance said to have happened at Dundee ; namely, that the mob, besides other outrages, had proceeded to the horrible and alarming length of imitating the bloody republicans of France, by planting the tree of liberty. He then had flatly contradicted the right honourable gentleman, by stating the matter in its true light ; that the persons who had planted the tree of liberty were boys, the eldest not above sixteen. He said, the schoolmasters with their rods were sufficient to quell this formidable insurrection ; and indeed they were the only proper troops to be employed on that duty. The honourable gentleman this night had not contradicted this account, because he could not, consistent with that truth and honour which certainly resided in his breast. But the honourable gentleman had this night

travelled from Dundee to Glasgow, and there he had found that Members of Parliament had joined popular and dangerous associations. The Colonel knew he alluded to him, and he was happy in this opportunity of explaining his conduct and principles relative to these meetings to the House. He avowed that he had attended these meetings, and would do so again ; in them, though he had not found much wealth, he had found much virtue. He detested that aristocratic pride which hindered men of rank and fortune from associating with the middling and lower orders of the people ; when discontents prevailed among them, he thought it prudent, nay, it was the duty of rich men, who had the advantage of higher education, and particularly Members of Parliament, to mingle with the people, to hear their complaints, to soothe and conciliate their minds, to instruct them in the constitutional methods of obtaining redress, and to inculcate the necessity of peace and good order. This had been his conduct, and that of other respectable men, though not in Parliament ; and what were the consequences ? The societies made resolutions to expel any person among them who should either riot, or excite riot ; and they had sent a deputation to the Lord Provost, offering their services to quell disturbances, and to preserve the peace. Had the right honourable Secretary, and men of fortune attached to him, employed themselves in this way, they would have been more useful to their country than they had been. Another honourable and learned gentleman had said, that insurrections of boys might be extremely dangerous ; much of the mischiefs done by Lord George Gordon's mobs were done by boys, who were afterwards executed ; and Massinello had overcome Naples by boys. This idea the Colonel treated with ridicule ; if that was the case, the House was not safe sitting so near Westminster school. Another honourable gentleman (Mr. Este) had been pleased to say, that the gentlemen on the side of the House from which he spoke, had held out a bait to the Dissenters ; by a parity of reasoning, it was equally fair for him to say, that the ministerial men had held out a bait to the High Churchmen and Tories. But it was not true that they had offered a bait to the Dissenters ; they had indeed offered most tempting baits to all the inhabitants of these kingdoms ; namely, the renovation of the constitution, the freedom of election, short

Parliaments, and the prevention of corruption. To obtain these grand objects, he said, he would always be ready to risk his fortune and his life.

Mr. GREY said, that in claiming his privilege again to rise, he should promise to detain the House only a very few minutes, and he trusted that they would hear him with more patience, as he did not mean to divide the House upon his motion. At the same time, he must declare his determination not to comply with the applications which had been made to withdraw that motion. He had accused the right honourable Secretary last session with having neglected to punish those who had been active in promoting riots at Birmingham : he had this evening repeated the accusation. On both occasions the answer had been the same. The right honourable gentleman said, that upon the earliest information which had been obtained of the disturbances, care had been taken immediately to dispatch the military. He did not accuse him with any delay or want of activity in dispatching the military. What he had then, and what he now complained of, was, that an equal measure was not dealt, and that excesses which on one side were so highly aggravated, on the other were suffered to pass without notice, or even attempted to be vindicated. For in what light, but as a justification of those excesses could be regarded what had been asserted by the right honourable Secretary, that the popular indignation excited against the Dissenters was not the consequence of their religious opinions, but of their own proceedings ? What was to be inferred from this assertion ? Were the Dissenters to be abandoned entirely to chance, and left unprotected to all the consequences of this popular indignation ? Were they to forfeit that privilege of security which other subjects enjoyed from the laws, and to be held out as victims, devoted to the vengeance of a mob ? But the right honourable Secretary had said, that if the Magistrates had not been prosecuted, the fault was not his ; it was the fault of Parliament. In reply to this he would only say, that because a prosecution had not been commenced by the right honourable gentleman, it had been rendered necessary to apply to Parliament for that purpose. Parliament did not think fit to enter into an inquiry upon the occasion. It did not become him in this instance to utter any reflection upon their conduct ; it did not become him

him to say, that the majority who voted against an inquiry had been actuated by any undue influence, or had carried too far the principle of confidence in Ministers. One fact he should state, that the affidavits which had been transmitted to the office of the right honourable Secretary, had been communicated to those very Magistrates. Some honourable Members had said, that the paper which had been the subject of his motion, was only a libel upon the Dissenters: it was a paper which accused them of being the authors of the American war, and of other calamities to the country, which was calculated to hold them out as objects of public odium and proscription. On this account, he complained that a prosecution had not been entered into for the protection of the subject. What he demanded was, that no unfair distinctions should be made between particular classes of the community; that equal justice should be rendered to all, and that all should enjoy the benefit of that protection which they derived from the laws and constitution of the country. He should now beg leave to conclude with submitting to the equity and honour of the House the decision of the question.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS, in reply, said, that he had not justified the riots; he had indeed said, what he conceived to be true, that the indignation which occasioned these riots was owing not so much to the religious opinions of the Dissenters as to their political conduct. With respect to the circumstance of the affidavits, application had been made to his office for a copy of them, which he had refused.

The question on the motion was then put and negatived.

The House adjourned.

*Tuesday, 18th December.*

The right honourable William Pitt took the oaths and his seat for Cambridge University.

Mr. HOBART brought up the report from the Committee of Supply.

Lord ARDEN laid upon the table estimates of the Navy for the ensuing year. To be taken into consideration to-morrow.

The SECRETARY AT WAR laid the Army estimates

on the table. To be taken into consideration on Monday next.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS brought in a bill to indemnify those who had advised His Majesty to limit the exportation of corn, and allow importation at the low duties; which was read a first time, and ordered to be read a second time to-morrow.

The House adjourned.

*Wednesday, 19th December.*

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS laid upon the table a copy of the Treaty of Peace entered into between the Marquis Cornwallis and Tippoo Saib.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS then rose to make the motion, notice of which he had given some days ago, and which he believed would pass unanimously. He entered into a short detail of the conduct of the Marquis Cornwallis, the difficulties he had encountered, the perseverance he had shewn, and his moderation and prudence, as well as gallantry and courage, during the whole of the war. He congratulated the House and the country on the honourable and advantageous termination of the war, and concluded by moving,

“ That the thanks of this House be given to the most noble  
“ Charles Marquis Cornwallis, Knight of the most noble order of the Garter, for his able, gallant, and meritorious  
“ conduct during the late war in India, by which an honour-  
“ able and advantageous peace hath been obtained.”

General SMITH rose, and gave his hearty approbation of the motion. He reverted to his opinion of the war which he had given last session, and his perfect approbation of it from the origin to the conclusion.

Mr. FRANCIS said, that the part he had taken and the opinions he had delivered, on former occasions, concerning the war in India, made it necessary for him to accompany his assent to the present motion with some explanations. But, before he did so, he could not help expressing his doubts and his surprise at some things, which had fallen from the honourable gentleman who spoke last. That if his doctrine respecting the supposed impropriety, and the injustice to officers serving in India, of canvassing the merits of any military operations there, while

those operations were depending, were laid down as a rule, it would take from the House all power of inquiry for the purpose of prohibition and prevention ; and, though possibly the measures in question might be of the most dangerous and mischievous nature, no notice whatever could be taken of them until they were finally concluded, when it could be of little use to inquire, and when Parliament would have nothing left but to approve or to condemn. That, when he heard the warm applause given by the same honourable gentleman to the treaty of perpetual *friendship* lately concluded with Tippoo Sultan, he was inclined to distrust his own apprehension and memory, and to suspect that hitherto he must have been in a gross error in thinking that the honourable gentleman had repeatedly declared in that House that there ought to be no peace with such an enemy ; that nothing would satisfy him but the capture of Seringapatam, and the extirpation of Tippoo Sultan. That hearing so different a language now, he was bound to conclude, that he must have completely mistaken the honourable gentleman's sentiments on this subject.

With respect to the motion, Mr. Francis said, that if nothing were in question but a personal compliment to Lord Cornwallis, whose character stood high with every man, he should be ready to concur in it. In the conduct of the war, he believed, he had great military merit, certainly in the perseverance and resolution, with which he had contended against great difficulties, and finally got the better of them. But if, by agreeing in this compliment, it were to be understood that he had relinquished any of his former opinions respecting the justice and policy of the war, he must beg leave to declare the contrary. On that subject he had seen no reason to alter his judgement. The success proved nothing in favour of the principle of the war. With respect to the peace, which the House were called upon to pronounce and to decide that it was *honourable and advantageous*, he thought it would have been an indispensable preliminary to such a vote, or at least a decent formality before judgement, that the treaty should have been read, and the articles explained ; whereas it was but that moment laid on the table, had never been read, nor one word said about the contents of it. It was impossible, therefore, that the House could know any thing of the matter. As to

himself, he knew enough of the treaty to form his opinion, which he should deliver as generally and as shortly as possible, for his own justification, and not with the smallest idea of influencing the opinion of any man. He admitted that, in a national and military view, the peace was *honourable*. You had your enemy at your feet, and you dictated to him such terms as you thought fit. Undoubtedly they were severe: but did they correspond with the avowed principles and objects of the war? On those principles he thought we were bound to take Seringapatam, and to extirpate the Mysore Government in the hands of Tippoo Sultan. With so perfidious, so cruel, and so treacherous a tyrant, if he deserved the epithets eternally heaped upon his name, there ought to be no accommodation, there could be no friendship. Lord Cornwallis had declared\*, that "the capture of Seringapatam would probably, in its consequences, furnish an ample reward for our labours:" and all his military operations appeared to be directed to that object. But, if the capital of Tippoo had been taken, there was an end of his power, and such was the expectation of the Public. After the wounds you had given him, it might be dangerous to leave him in possession of the means of future revenge. But you have made a great acquisition of territory. I deny that this of itself is an advantage. In the prudent management of that immense territory, which you possessed already, you might have found resources infinitely more valuable and more secure than any that can be derived from a farther extension of your dominion. How it stands with the honour, the interest, and the policy of Great Britain, to make war for the acquisition of territory, is a question which I shall leave to be considered by those, who have sanctioned an opposite principle by repeated orders, by resolutions of Parliament, and finally by an act of the Legislature. I cannot abandon my principles so readily as they do. But, independent of general policy, I affirm, that, to take your compensation in territory, was not the most profitable way of taking it. You ought to have taken it in money, that is, in the form of a tribute. I understand that the gross annual revenue of this newly-acquired territory is estimated at forty

lacks of rupees. It is my opinion that, after all expences of defence and management are deducted, and a reasonable allowance made for embezzlement, a specific tribute of even twenty lacks would have exceeded the nett produce of a nominal revenue of forty lacks into the Treasury : and as to the security, as long as you were strong enough to keep the territory, just so long you might keep the tribute, and not a moment longer. I am even of opinion, that better security might be had for the tribute than for the territory. For these, and many other reasons, I cannot admit that the terms of the peace have corresponded with the professed principle of the war, or, in point of *advantage*, are such as ought to have been imposed. Nevertheless, as the war has certainly been conducted with vigour, and ended with honour to our arms, I think the motion ought to pass unanimously.

Mr. FOX said, he could not pretend to say any thing about the treaty, as he had not read it ; however, he thought it necessary to say a few words in consequence of what had fallen from him last year, when he stated grounds for opposing any mention of Lord Cornwallis's conduct in their address to the throne. He was happy now that his inclination went with his duty in approving of the present motion to applaud the conduct of the noble Lord, against whom he had never insinuated any thing like a reflection, although he had disapproved of the war, and opposed voting thanks for success before it appeared that success had been obtained. He concluded that, by giving his hearty approbation to the conduct of the noble Lord, he must not be understood to pledge himself to support the treaty of peace, because he considered that as a subject of future discussion.

Major MAITLAND thought it necessary to say a few words to prevent misrepresentation of his conduct when he opposed the origin of the war as unjust and impolitic. He most heartily agreed to the present motion, because he was convinced, from personal and local knowledge of the noble Lord's conduct, that it highly merited the thanks of his country ; at the same time his opinion of the origin of the war was not altered, and it was the measure, not the man, he had spoke against on former occasions. His victory over the enemy at Seringapatam, he thought, was not to be compared to the no-



ble Lord's victory over himself ; he had overcome all the ambition and pride that he might have been supposed to feel from his successes, and, with the most laudable moderation, had preferred concluding a peace to following up his successes, which was acting the part of a worthy citizen as well as a gallant officer.

Mr. WILBERFORCE made a short speech, paying a tribute to the virtues and abilities of the noble Lord and the system of conduct he had followed.

Colonel MACLEOD said likewise a few words expressive of his approbation of the conduct of Lord Cornwallis.

The motion being put, passed *nem. con.*

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS, after some preliminary observations, moved,

“ That the thanks of this House be given to Major-general  
“ Sir William Medows, Knight of the most honourable order  
“ of the Bath, to Major-general Abercromby, and the several  
“ officers of the army, both European and native, under the  
“ command of the Marquis Cornwallis, for their gallant  
“ conduct and meritorious exertions during the late war in  
“ India.”

“ That this House doth highly approve and acknowledge  
“ the services of the non-commissioned officers and private soldiers,  
“ both European and native, in the army serving under  
“ the command of the Marquis Cornwallis, during the late  
“ war in India ; and that the same be signified to them by the  
“ commanders of the several corps, who are desired to thank  
“ them for their gallant behaviour.”

Both of these motions passed *nem. con.*

Ordered, That Mr. Speaker do signify the said resolutions to the most noble Charles Marquis Cornwallis, Sir William Medows, and Major-general Abercromby.

The House adjourned.

*Thursday, 20th December.*

Mr. BURKE called the attention of the House to the business of the trial of Mr. Hastings. The character of the kingdom at large as the prosecutors, the character of the House of Commons as the representatives of the People, the character of the Managers as the agents of the Commons, and the cha-

rafter of the Peers as the judges, were involved in this trial; and hence there was a necessity that this prosecution should go on gravely. On the part of the Managers there should be an attendance of active duty and decorum. It was observable that they had waited more for the Lords than the Lords waited for them, during the whole of this trial. He then nominated the old Managers, and moved "that they be Managers to conduct the impeachment against Warren Hastings, Esq." Ordered.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved the order of the day, which was, to take into consideration measures to prevent the exportation of naval stores, &c.

The House resolved into a Committee upon this subject, Mr. Hobart in the chair.

Mr. BURKE observed, that orders had some time ago been given, as he understood, for 3000 instruments of murder, under the name of daggers. This order had been augmented to 5000, to be sent to our good and humane neighbours the French: it was their intention to be supplied from this country with all sorts of small offensive weapons.

Mr. Chancellor PITT then moved, "that the Chairman be directed to move the House for leave to bring in a bill to restrain the exportation of naval stores, and more effectually to restrain the exportation of salt petre, arms, and ammunition, when prohibited by proclamation or order of Council."

A short conversation took place between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Fox; after which the resolution passed.

The Chairman reported, and, on motion, leave was given to bring in the bill.

Mr. HOBART brought up the report from the Committee of Supply, granting 25,000 seamen, including marines, for the service of the present year.

Mr. SHERIDAN observed, that there were now about to be voted 9000 men more than we had for the service of the last year. He did not rise to oppose that vote, although if it were only for a decent respect hitherto uniformly paid to the representatives of the People, something like explanation ought to have been given, but to express his hearty concurrence, because, he believed, the general aspect of foreign affairs, and

the necessity of guarding against foreign enemies, required the augmentation. He would even have voted a greater number of seamen, had the Minister proposed it; because, though he deprecated war, yet should that hateful necessity arrive, he was decidedly of opinion, that, being once engaged in it, and contemplating the objects with which our enemy would undoubtedly pursue it, it became this nation at once to provide, as far as human prudence and effort could provide, that the war, if at all events we were to have a war, should not be a languishing and protracted war, or ineffectual to the end for which it was undertaken. If such were to be the event, he had no doubt but that Government would receive the unanimous support of the House to every proposition tending to give vigour and effect to the operations of war; yet he earnestly hoped that it was still a practicable measure to preserve peace. It was under that impression the House were now voting this armament. After all he had heard in former debates, he could not but congratulate the House and his country on the prospect of peace, which the present vote authorised him to indulge. It proved, at least, that those who had proscribed peace, who had peremptorily declared the country to be actually at war, were not very confidentially admitted into the Minister's secrets, any more than they appeared to have very judiciously consulted the true interests of their country. "I repeat again," said Mr. Sheridan, "peace, if it be possible, consistently with the honour and safety of the nation; but if war, an united and instant exertion of the whole energies of the nation, and an unanimous support of the executive government, in calling forth those efforts for the defence of our country and Constitution."

[Here Mr. Burke rose and interrupted Mr. Sheridan, conceiving he had finished. After explanation Mr. Burke apologised, and Mr. Sheridan proceeded.]

He said he had certainly concluded all he meant to say directly on the question; but that there was another point which he was confident it was in order to introduce, upon which, seeing the Minister, for the first time, in his place, he had wished to repeat his opinion. He was convinced, notwithstanding the gross and indiscriminate abuse thrown out against every human creature bearing the name of Frenchman, that

there existed in that country a sincere disposition to listen to and respect the opinion of the British nation. He alluded to the situation of the King now on his trial, and of his family. He was confident that the French nation was ill informed of the temper and feelings of the free, but generous and humane, People of Great Britain, and that if they could be in any authentic manner apprised of what he in his soul and conscience believed to be the genuine impression of the public mind on this subject, namely, that there was not one man of any description or party who did not deprecate, and who would not deplore, the fate of those persecuted and unfortunate victims, should the apprehended catastrophe take place, he was confident that such a conviction might produce a considerable influence, he wished he could venture to say a successful effect, on the public mind in Paris, and throughout France. Mr. Sheridan pressed shortly his reasons for thinking thus, and said that among those whose hearts would be most revolted and disgusted by the unjust and inhuman act of cruelty he alluded to, he believed would be found all those who had been foremost in rejoicing at the destruction of the old despotism of France, and who had eagerly hoped and expected that to whatever extremes as to principles of government, a momentary enthusiasm might lead a people new to the light of liberty; that however wild their theories might be, yet there would have appeared in the quiet, deliberate acts of their conduct those inseparable characteristics of real liberty, and of true valour, justice, magnanimity, and mercy. He would not take upon him to give any opinion as to the manner in which the public sentiment of England might be expressed on this subject, but he was more and more convinced, from the latest intelligence from France, that the opportunity ought not to be neglected.

Mr. BURKE reprobated the words justice, magnanimity, and mercy, as applied to France. He observed that the honourable gentleman who spoke last had, in some degree, reproached the House for not being in the secret of the Cabinet. What he probably did know he was not bound to know, what was the disposition of the French Ministers; nor was he (Mr. Burke) bound to know that of the English. The honourable gentleman had, in one part of his speech, recommended vigorous exertion if a war was to take place; and again, he said,

in another place, he was glad to find the armament was so small, as proved there were still hopes of peace. These two sentiments did not appear to him to tally very well. He then came to the question, and said, he should have given his vote heartily for 40,000 men, if that number had been proposed; but he would not say any thing against the Minister, as he must best know the number that would be wanted, and therefore he should give his vote for what was now proposed. His opinion was, that the disposition of the French people was dangerous to Europe. He knew nothing of the gentlemen of the phalanx, he should leave them to themselves. But as to the French, he must again repeat, he could not rely, as the honourable gentleman who spoke last desired, on the justice, the magnanimity, or the mercy of the French, particularly when they charged their King as a criminal for offences for which that House would not call the meanest individual in the country to their bar to answer. The truth was, the King was in the custody of assassins, who were both his accusers and his judges, and his destruction was inevitable. He then returned to the question, and observed, that if the number had been 40,000 instead of 25,000, he should have given his vote more cheerfully.

Mr. SHERIDAN rose and claimed the indulgence of the House beyond the usual bounds of explanation. So perverse a misrepresentation of any Member's speech, accompanied by such unwarrantable insinuations, had, perhaps, never been heard in that House. He would not attribute it to any ill purpose, or any ill motive, for he believed the right honourable Member's ill temper had so run away with him, that he scarcely knew himself what he meant, or what he had said.

Mr. Sheridan, after explaining on other points, concluded with exculpating himself particularly from one accusation of Mr. Burke. He denied his having arraigned the vote of the majority on Thursday, as being untrue to their trust, for he maintained, that he did not believe there were two Members in the House who had voted on the grounds, or the arguments, upon which he (Mr. Burke) had recommended the war: or rather on which he had declared the war was actually begun.---The Minister and the majority had consented to a war of necessity and defence, the object of which was ascertained; the

honourable gentleman had insisted on a volunteer crusade of vengeance, of which no man could see the end.

Mr. FOX said, he wished not to make any comment on the sentiments of others upon this subject; what he was most solicitous about was, the making clearly understood his own. "I beg leave to say," added he, "that what has fallen from my honourable friend (Mr. Sheridan) and what he has been pleased to apply the words magnanimity, justice, and mercy to, had no reference whatever to the proceedings on an impending event which all of us deprecate, and which every honest heart in Europe wishes to avert; I mean the unhappy situation of the Royal family of France, on which, although the subject is not specifically before us, I wish to say a few, and but a few words. I therefore beg leave to declare, that the proceedings on that awful event are so far from being magnanimity, justice, or mercy, that they are directly the reverse, that they are injustice, cruelty, and pusillanimity. This sentiment will, I hope, before it is too late, gain ground in France, for I have reason to believe, that there is in that country, a disposition to attend to the opinions and sentiments of this; and I rejoice to learn by every testimony I can have, that it is the unanimous sense of this House, and of this country, that the manner in which the unhappy Royal family in France are treated, is, as I have before described, founded in injustice, cruelty, and pusillanimity! I own this subject has made a deep impression upon my mind, and it has just occurred to me, (perhaps a better method may be easily devised), but it has occurred to me, that this House should address His Majesty for a gracious communication of the words, or the substance of His Majesty's directions to Lord Gower, in consequence of which his Lordship left Paris. Then I should propose an address of thanks to His Majesty, for his gracious communication; after which I would add an expression of our abhorrence of the proceedings against the Royal family of France, in which, I have no doubt, we shall be supported by the whole country.

If there can be any means suggested that will be better adapted to produce the unanimous concurrence of this House, and of all the country, with respect to the measure now under consideration in Paris, I should be obliged to any person for his better suggestion upon the subject. For although I by no

means stand up, either for the justice, the magnanimity, or the mercy of those persons who are conducting the trial of the King of France, yet I cannot help thinking that an unanimous address of the House of Commons, and, as I have no reason to doubt would be the case, of the House of Lords, expressing their abhorrence, and that of the country in general, of such proceedings, must have a decisive influence with persons of all descriptions in France. I do not profess to be in their secrets, and I trust that the means I have of knowing something of the general state of that country, by conversations with gentlemen recently returned from thence, will not be misconstrued into any knowledge of, or participation whatever in their intentions. I have said thus much, in order to contradict one of the most cruel misrepresentations of what I have before said in our late debates ; and that my language may not be interpreted from the manner in which other gentlemen may have chosen to answer it. I have spoken the genuine sentiments of my heart, and I anxiously wish the House to come to some resolution upon the subject."

With respect to the augmentation of the navy, Mr. Fox said, the Minister had his entire support. He voted with all his heart for the 25,000 ; he should have given an equal concurrence to the number of 40,000. He should not move for that number, because His Majesty's Ministers knew, or had good reason to believe, that there might not be need for more at present. He thought it necessary to say, that he did not view the progress of the French with indifference. At their progress he was alarmed. He voted cordially for the armament, and would vote for a greater, if a greater was proposed. But the House knew, that if the present armament were found insufficient for the exigency of affairs, it was perfectly competent to increase it hereafter. Here Mr. Fox observed, that the three different views of the subject rendered an armament equally necessary : first, if we go to war ; secondly, if we do not go to war ; and, in the third case, which I confess I do not understand, if the right honourable gentleman is to do neither the one nor the other. If we go to war, the necessity of an armament is obvious. If we negotiate, which I confess I strongly recommend, we must be armed, in order to enforce our demand of satisfaction, and secure success to our ne-

gociations. He had great hopes, however, that war would still be avoided, because the King's speech gave assurances to that effect. But if the necessity of affairs should require an increase of the armament now voted, he begged it to be understood that His Majesty's Ministers, as far as that went, had not a warmer supporter than himself.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that he should not trouble the House with many sentiments this evening, but he must confess it gave him cordial satisfaction to hear the opinion of several gentlemen upon the general subject of debate. He had no means of knowing, except by the votes of the House, what passed on the former debates, as he was not then a Member. It was proposed for the Minister to give an explanation of certain circumstances; he did not think there was any necessity for an explanation. He knew His Majesty's speech, and from the notoriety of the circumstances it contained, he concluded that it was impossible that any thing should be entertained but an universal sentiment of concurrence in that House. For the honour of the Crown, for the honour and safety of the country, he hoped for a general concurrence in support of His Majesty. So much he had really anticipated. If indeed there was to be any doubt upon the armament, the question, he thought, would be, whether the preparation was not too little; and therefore, had he been in the House, he thought he could have shewn that a proposition which was moved was against the dignity of the Crown, against the interests of the Public, and, finally, unprincipled and disgraceful. Our sending an Ambassador to France would have counteracted and solemnly disclaimed those very principles on which the whole of our dignity was supported. To solicit any thing from France was to solicit the eternal disgrace of this country. He observed, that it was extremely proper, as the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) had observed, for this country to express its abhorrence of the horrid and merciless catastrophe with which the King of France was threatened; but although he should have felt that sending an Ambassador to France was directly of a contrary tendency from that which these gentlemen supposed, still he was ready to allow that those who wished to send an Ambassador thought it would operate in favour of that unhappy Monarch. He learned with pleasure, from all quarters of the



House, that, if possible, we should avert a war, but that, if a war shall appear to be necessary, they would all agree to carry it on with vigour ; for that the support of the House should be cordial at all events, and that he had great reason to hope for the general concurrence of the country. He was glad also to find the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) declare that the House, in voting for 25,000 men, did not preclude themselves at any future period from going farther, if the exigency of the case should so require. He begged it to be understood that this was not all that he might have to require for the service of the State, but that this was all that, in his judgement, was at present necessary.

Whether peace would be preserved or not, he would not venture to give his opinion. If it could be preserved consistently with the honour of the Crown, the internal safety of this country, and the general security of Europe, he should be very happy ; but after the repeated injuries and insults which France had committed to almost all the powers of Europe, it could not be expected that Great Britain should be very conciliating in its manner. However nothing on the part of Government, consistently, as he said before, with the dignity of the Crown, our internal safety, and the general security of Europe, should be omitted to avert the calamity of war. He adopted Mr. Fox's idea of addressing the Throne, and adding the sentiments of the House, to shew its abhorrence of the proceedings against the King of France ; in order to justify itself to posterity. He seemed to express some surprise at these sentiments being so readily adopted on that side of the House.

Mr. FOX observed, that the right honourable gentleman had expressed a surprise at the readiness with which such sentiments were adopted. Had the right honourable gentleman been in the House from the first day of the meeting of Parliament, he would have heard the same sentiments, nearly in the same words, expressed, said Mr. Fox, " by all my honourable friends " and myself."

Here the resolutions were all read and agreed to.

Mr. Chancellor PITT stated some difficulties, which he feared would occur in the course of debating this address.

Mr. SHERIDAN was rejoiced to see Mr. Pitt so readily adopt the general idea. He recommended however the utmost

caution and nicety in the manner of executing it, if our object was only a general protest for the sake of posterity, as seemed to be the right honourable gentleman's principal motive, perhaps it mattered little how it was worded, but as he was actuated by a sincere hope that some actual good might result to the living objects of our common apprehension; he conceived the manner of touching the subject required the most temperate and acute attention, to do any good we must look sincerely to our purpose, and suppress our passions; every thing like menace or insult to the people, whose minds we wished to influence, must be avoided; it was a delicate subject, but when the question came he would speak out, and without reserve.

Mr. BURKE entered again upon the affairs of France, and spoke much at length of the impropriety of His Majesty condescending to send such assassins any message; it was no doubt what they wished very much, they had already humbled one King, and would be glad to see the humiliation of another.

The SPEAKER submitted to the House, whether the right honourable gentleman was in order.

The general sense of the House supported the chair, and Mr. Burke sat down.

Mr. Chancellor PITT then moved, "That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, praying, that he will be most graciously pleased to give directions, that there be laid before this House copies of His Majesty's orders to Lord Gower on his quitting Paris, after the deposition of their Most Christian Majesties."

This motion was adopted. The mode of our interference, and the question, whether any message shall be sent to France, is to be debated to-morrow.

Sir JOHN JERVIS said, it must be in your recollection, Mr. Speaker, and in the recollection of many other persons in the House, that when I gave notice on Monday of the motion I shall have the honour to submit to you this night, I declared and repeated it, that if the Admiralty had any measure in immediate contemplation for the protection and preservation of those valuable men who had spent their best days in the service of their King and country, I should not interfere: but their distressed case was so urgent and pressing, that if I did not receive satisfaction upon the subject, I should cer-

as well on this account, as because this step appears to him the most conformable to the principles of neutrality which he has hitherto observed. His Majesty's pleasure therefore is, that you should quit that city, and return to England, as soon as you shall have been able to procure the necessary passports for that purpose.

"In all the conversations that you may have occasion to hold before your departure, you will take care to express yourself in a manner conformable to the sentiments herein communicated to you; and you will take especial care not to neglect any opportunity of declaring, that at the same time His Majesty means to observe the principles of neutrality in every thing which regards the arrangement of the internal government of France, he does not conceive that he departs from those principles in manifesting, by every possible means in his power, his solicitude for the personal safety of their Most Christian Majesties, and the Royal Family. He most earnestly hopes that his wishes in that respect will not be deceived; that the Royal Family will be preserved from every act of violence; the commission of which would not fail to excite sentiments of universal indignation throughout all Europe.

"I have the honour to be, &c. &c.

"HENRY DUNDAS."

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that from the paper which had just been read, the House would perceive what then were the sentiments of His Majesty, with respect to the transactions which had occurred in France, and the prospects which existed in that country; and these, he presumed, were the sentiments of every British heart upon the same occasion. What now must be those sentiments, when such rigours, such cruelties, had been exercised, when a spirit of the utmost barbarity had been displayed, and nothing remained to look forward to, but that dreadful and final consummation, which could not fail to excite universal horror and indignation. The only difficulty that had occurred to him was, in what terms that House could express itself suitable to the occasion. Considering the unanimity of sentiment which prevailed upon the subject, he had at first thought, that the best mode in which the sense of that House could be expressed, would be by a vote—a vote which might reach the whole of Europe, the influence of which should extend to France, and might perhaps there produce the effect which was so much to be desired. But in turning the business over in his mind, a doubt had occurred to him, and had since been suggested to him by others, whether this would be the best mode of proceeding. This doubt arose not from any suspicion of the unanimity of that House in expressing their indignation at a conduct which at once united the highest

degree of cruelty and insanity. No! from the expressions which had been uttered on every side, he entertained no suspicion of that nature. But this doubt had arisen from a reflection, that as that House, in giving their vote, would feel themselves bound to adopt terms the most strong and indignant, whether by this circumstance national pride and jealousy might not be alarmed, whether these might not have the effect in that state of fury to which the minds of the people were worked up, to mask and disguise the atrocity of their conduct, and hurry them on to the commission of that very crime which it would be the intention of that House, by giving a vote, to exert their influence to prevent. Influenced by this consideration, it had appeared to him to be a better mode simply to allow the paper which had been read to remain upon the table of the House.—He should conclude, therefore, without any motion, except any thing should arise in the course of the discussion. This mode, which he had produced, would, without the necessity of any particular interference, fully imply the concurrence of that House, in the expression of His Majesty's sentiments. It at the same time would indicate their sense, that to the sentiments already expressed by His Majesty, they considered that no addition was wanting, and no confirmation was necessary.

Mr. WINDHAM observed, that nothing remained for him but to express his entire concurrence with the right honourable gentleman in every syllable he had uttered upon this subject. If the sense of that House, the organ of the public voice at home, was to be expressed to a foreign power, the only organ this country could have for that purpose was its Sovereign. He agreed also with the right honourable gentleman, that any formal communication to Paris might irritate and provoke the desperation of some persons, who might have their Sovereign in their power, and by such means we should contribute to produce what we were all so anxious to prevent.

Mr. FOX wished in a few words to express his concurrence with the proposal of the Chancellor of the Exchequer. His opinion upon this subject, he believed, was the opinion of the whole House and the whole country. It was better that we should proceed no further than that we should engage ourselves too deeply. He had heard it said that the proceedings against the unhappy King of France were unnecessary. He would go

a great deal farther, and say he believed them to be highly unjust, and not only repugnant to all the common feelings of mankind, but also contrary to all the fundamental principles of law; for he regarded it as a principle of natural justice, an essential part of all human policy never to be departed from under any circumstances or pretence whatever, in any country, "That the criminal law shall be rigidly construed according to its letter—that subsequent laws shall be adapted to crimes, but that all persons shall be tried according to the laws in being, at the time of committing the acts charged as criminal." He thought now as he had on a former occasion expressed, that if the sentiment of that House was perfectly unanimous, and that of the other House also, that to communicate that circumstance to France would have a decided influence on persons of all descriptions there. He had assigned some reasons for being of that opinion, but he should say no more upon that subject at present. If there was a point on which his opinion was more clear than on any other, it was upon the abstract rule of justice with respect to the trial of persons for offences against law, and he was sure it was impossible to keep up that rule without condemning, from the beginning to the end, the proceedings against the unfortunate King of France. These proceedings militated also against the sentiments that had been expressed by every individual who had said any thing upon the subject, and against the feelings of all the country.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, that this subject appeared to him, as he had expressed himself last night, of great difficulty, importance and delicacy. After the best attention he could give the subject, he must confess he knew of nothing better than that which was proposed by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, and therefore he concurred in it. However, he rejoiced to think, that our common object was obtained in a great degree.

Mr. BURKE professed himself obliged to Mr. Windham for the manner in which he had spoken, and observed, that the manly declarations of the two gentlemen, who spoke last, deserved the highest approbation. He highly applauded the principle of our constitution, that the King was the only organ by which the sentiments of this country could be conveyed to any

foreign power. He observed it would have been impossible to send a message to Paris, that would not counteract the purpose of averting the cruelty so much deprecated. There were two parties there, equally the enemies of the King, the irritable and furious,—and the malicious and timid. If a message in the imperious stile was to be sent, the irritable and furious would become desperate. If in a mild tone, the timid would take courage, and become more dangerous than ever they were.—The House was about to do itself great honour by its moderation and its dignity.

The motion, “ That this paper do now lie upon the table “ to be perused by the Members of this House,” was then put, and carried *nemine contradicente*. The House adjourned.

*Monday, 24th December.*

The ATTORNEY GENERAL observed, that the circulation of assignats, and of other French paper currency, in this country, might become very dangerous; he enumerated many of the evils which in his opinion would be felt by the people of this country, if a timely check should not be put on this sort of commerce. He concluded with moving for leave to bring in a bill for preventing the circulation of promissory, or other notes, orders, bonds, or other obligations for the payment of certain sum or sums of money, &c. issued under any power or authority from France.

Mr. BURKE declared himself a sincere friend to the principle of this bill. The circulation of these assignats, and other papers for the payment of sums of money from France, in this country, was of a treasonable nature. There were many other papers, originating from the same source, circulating in this country, which were also of a treasonable nature. There were actions too of certain persons in this country, who might be called agents of the French faction, that were of a treasonable nature, although perhaps none of these could be brought strictly within the letter of the act of Parliament of the 25th of King Edward the Third. That was a very good reason why such a bill as that now moved for should pass into a law. The House, he was sure, would, in the course of the present session, be often compelled to take many of the circumstances which he had hinted at into consideration: and therefore he submitted

to the learned gentleman, whether it might not be proper, at some future day, for the House to resolve itself into a Committee to take all these things into consideration, and to come to some strong measure to prevent the mischief with which this country was threatened upon these topics; or whether there should not be a Committee of Secrecy upon the subject. At all events, it was impossible for him to utter a syllable against the present motion for leave to bring in a bill, the principle of which appeared to him to be so salutary; he, on the contrary, approved of the motion highly.

The motion was then read, and leave was given to bring in the bill.

The order of the day being read for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of Supply,

The SECRETARY AT WAR stated the necessity of an augmentation to the army of 10 men to each company of horse and foot, making in all about 6,200 men. He then moved the following resolutions:

“ That it is the opinion of this Committee that a number of land forces, including 1620 Invalids, amounting in the whole to 17,344 men, commissioned and non-commissioned Officers included, be employed for the year 1793.”

“ That a sum not exceeding 579,174*l.* 18*s* 1½*d.* be granted to His Majesty for defraying the charge of pay, cloathing, &c. of the said forces.”

“ 351,385*l.* 1*s* 10*d* for the forces and garrison at Gibraltar and a corps of foot in New South Wales.”

“ 11,559*l.* 17*s.* 11*d.* for defraying the difference between the British and Irish establishments of five regiments of foot serving at Gibraltar and the West Indies for 1793.”

“ 8323*l.* 17*s.* 10½*d.* for the pay to one regiment of Light Dragoons and nine battalions of foot in East-India, for 1793.”

“ 117,500*l.* for recruiting and contingencies of His Majesty's land forces, &c.”

“ 6409*l.* 8*s.* for the pay of the General and General Staff in Great Britain, for 1793.”

“ 13,940*l.* 8*s.* 11*d.* for half and full pay to supernumerary Officers for 1793.”

“ 52,964l. 6s. 7d. to the Paymaster General, Secretary at War, Commissary General, Judge Advocate, &c.”

“ 156,797l. 18s. 4d. for reduced Officers of land forces and marines.”

“ 202l. 1s. 8d. to the Officers and private gentlemen of two troops of Horse Guards and the superannuated gentlemen of the four troops of Horse Guards.”

“ 3000l. for Officers late in the service of the States General for 1793.”

“ 55,092l. 10s. to reduced Officers of the British American forces for 1793.”

“ 4907l. 10s. to reduced Officers of British American forces for 1793.”

“ 9313l. 6s. 3d. for pensions to widows of commissioned Officers for 1793.”

“ 177,995l. 2s. 1d. for the in and out pensioners of Chelsea Hospital.”

“ 4500l. for new roads, bridges, &c. in the Highlands of North Britain for 1793.”

“ 278,122, 14s. 2d. for the embodied militia of the several counties in South Britain for 1793.”

“ That a sum upon account, not exceeding 72,000l. for the charge of contingencies, &c. for the embodied militia for 1793.”

“ That a sum not exceeding 320l. 6s. 9d. be granted to His Majesty for defraying the expence of services performed by the Office of Ordnance previous to the 31st of Dec. 1783, and not provided for by Parliament.”

“ 15,095l. 16s. 3d. for the expence of the Ordnance for land service, and not provided for in 1791.”

“ 6826l. 15s. 4d. for the expence of services of the Ordnance, and not provided for by Parliament in 1792.”

“ 832,068l. 15s. 4d. for the expence of the Ordnance, and not provided for by Parliament in 1791.”

“ That 448,374l. 19s. 9d. for the charge of the Office of Ordnance for land service, for 1793.”

M<sup>r</sup>. FOX said, that upon the principle on which he gave his vote for the seamen for the service of His Majesty for the ensuing year, namely, because he thought they might be necessary in the present state of affairs, he should be ready to give



his vote to-night. The cases were not equally clear, however, in both instances. With respect to the seamen voted the other night, he, as well as the other Members of that House, thought the augmentation proper, and therefore the vote was given. But the case was doubtful with respect to the army. An augmentation of the army might be necessary on account of the internal state of the country; and no doubt it was under that idea that the Minister had thought fit to call out and embody the militia, and make all the military preparations which we now witnessed. But if it was only upon the idea of internal commotions that this augmentation to the army was wanted, he ought in strictness to give it his negative, because he did not believe that any tumults or commotions were likely to happen; and therefore an augmented military force was unnecessary; and even if the situation of this country was otherwise, the increase of the army was not the step he would recommend. These were not the reasons why he should give his vote to-night in favour of the motion made by the Secretary at War. He begged to be understood as giving his vote upon the general posture of our affairs with reference to foreign powers, and which, in his opinion, was such as required strength on the part of the executive Government.

There were other points to which he must beg leave to call the attention of the Committee, because he thought them highly important to the military service, and interesting to the community at large. He knew very well that it was the prerogative of the Crown to judge of the propriety of making any appointments at any time in the army; but that, like every other prerogative of the Crown, was given to the Crown for the good and benefit of the people; and therefore the exercise of it should be canvassed and examined by that House, when they were voting away the money of the people. The subject to which he wished to call the attention of the Committee was this. He had no positive knowledge upon the subject; but he had heard from general report, that several officers of high rank, and, he believed, of acknowledged military merit, as well as exemplary conduct and unblemished character, had been dismissed the service. One of them was a man with whom he was related in blood, but with whom, on account of his virtues, he was still more intimately connected in friend-

ship. He meant Lord Edward Fitzgerald. Another noble Lord's case was to be noticed : of this nobleman he knew nothing but by report, which certainly was in his favour ; the Lord Sempill : these two officers had been discharged from the service. He did not know the grounds upon which they had been dismissed ; but he had heard it was for entering into a subscription for the purpose of supporting the French against the combined armies. Now, whether that subscription was a right or a wrong measure in itself, was a question which it did not belong to that House to canvass, unless there was some motion specifically to that effect before them ; but of this he was sure, it was a measure that was at all events legal, and might be infinitely meritorious. Nor was it without a precedent. When Corsica was about to become subject to the dominion of France, there was a general subscription in this country to assist the Corsicans. There was, we all know, the very last summer, a general subscription to assist Poland, against the infamous oppression of Russia. He did not think that any blame was to be attached to that act ; the first municipal officer in the kingdom commenced it, and much to the honour of the people of this country it became very general ; that it did not prove effectual, was what every man with an honest heart would commend. With respect to France, individuals had the same right to subscribe as we had with regard to Poland ; for France at that time was in a state of perfect neutrality with regard to us ; so all Europe was informed, by His Majesty's commands to Lord Gower when he was recalled from Paris, and therefore it was not criminal in any individual to assist the French. If it was not criminal in any individual to assist the French, it could not be so in any of His Majesty's officers in his service. If they did their duty as soldiers, they were not to relinquish any of their civil rights. Whatever, therefore, Ministers might think, or might wish, they should not have dismissed these noblemen from the service. There was nothing that could be done with innocence and propriety by any one of His Majesty's subjects, that might not be done with equal innocence and propriety by any one of the officers in His Majesty's service. These were points that were not to be carelessly overlooked, because the whole safety of the service might depend upon them ; for while it was thought necessary

that we should have a military establishment annually, by passing our mutiny bill, it was necessary that the officers we had should be men connected with the great landed interest of this country ; that was one great security we had of their attachment to the constitution, and the fidelity of their conduct. But should it ever be generally understood, and adopted into practice, that in every difference of opinion between the King's Ministers and the King's Officers, the latter were to be subject to the caprice of the former, and that an officer, the moment he entered the service, became a mere soldier, without any civil rights, that was to say, a mere military machine, with none but military views—a soldier who had forgot that he was a citizen—there was an end at once of all the honour and all the glory which had hitherto belonged to the military service in this country. He mentioned the cases of these two noblemen only in this respect, because he had not heard of any others being in a similar situation ; he hoped that such cases would but very rarely occur, because he knew it would be very dangerous indeed to the service. If blame belonged to them in any part of their military conduct, surely they might be subjected to a Court Martial. But there was another case still more remarkable ; he meant the case of Captain Gawler.—[See the Letter subjoined in a note \*.] After stating this case, he observed, it

\* *To the EDITOR of the MORNING CHRONICLE.*

SIR,

I have to request, that you will be pleased to insert in your paper the following particulars of the dismissal, which I lately received from my situation in His Majesty's service, as senior Captain of the second regiment of Life Guards. I feel it necessary thus to state these particulars, in order to clear away all misrepresentation of my conduct. Perhaps too, from the nature of this transaction, it is a duty which I owe to the public to make it generally known.

On Friday, the 8th of December instant, Lieutenant Callard, the Adjutant of the regiment, called upon me, and read to me the following requisition. He did not think proper to leave the requisition with me, but he was pleased to furnish me with a copy of every part of it, except the signatures. I have not since had the original requisition in my possession, but I have reason to believe, that I am perfectly correct in my statement of the signatures :

“ The Officers of the 2d regiment of Life Guards having received certain information, that Captain Gawler has been admitted a member of one of the republican clubs, called the Society for Constitutional Information, and as it appears to them incompatible with

was against all the principles of military discipline, and highly detrimental to the interest of the service, to dismiss an officer for refusing to erase his name from a society. It was laying a foundation for political disputes between officers in the army,

his situation as holding a commission in the 2d regiment of Life Guards, a corps immediately about the King's person; the officers therefore request, that Captain Gawler will withdraw his name and support from a club whose principles are evidently republican."

Felix Buckley	R. Isaac Starke, Lieut.
John Hughes, Captain	Thomas Rainsforth, Lieut.
William Mansell, Captain	Gerard Gosselin, Sub-Lieut.
Arthur Cuthbert, Captain	Abel Rous Dottin, Sub-Lieut.
George Callard, Lieut.	John Buller, Lieut.

All, except General Buckley, Mr. Gawler's junior officers.

Three officers of the regiment, Lieutenant Capper, Lieutenant Beresford, and Lieutenant Impey, who were present at the meeting at which this requisition was signed, refused to set their names to it, conceiving it to be an unwarrantable interference of the corps upon the subject.

On Saturday the 9th of December instant, I waited on Major General Buckley, who is the commanding officer of the regiment, and delivered to him my answer to the requisition.

After he had read the answer, he endeavoured to convince me that prudential considerations ought to induce me to yield to the requisition; but failing in that object, he then stated to me in substance that my conduct, if I persisted, might materially affect the interest of the three gentlemen who had refused to sign the requisition.—This suggestion alarmed me on their account, and I requested to be allowed till the Monday following to consider my answer. A few moments cool consideration after I had quitted General Buckley, convinced me that it was not to be expected, that because those three gentlemen in their character of Judges had happened to entertain a different opinion from their superior officers, that their private interest could in any manner suffer, and therefore, early on the morning of Sunday the 10th of December instant, I returned to General Buckley the answer which I had delivered to him the day before, and which is as follows:

" Captain Gawler having received a paper addressed to him by several of the officers of his regiment, requesting to withdraw his name and support from the Society for Constitutional Information, although he observes, that such paper is signed but by part of his corps, yet he does not hesitate to give an immediate answer to the requisition contained in it.

" By the mere act of becoming a member of a society, expressly instituted for the purpose of Constitutional Information, he certainly does not consider himself as having departed in any degree from the character of his situation. As an officer in His Majesty's service, his duty is to defend the Constitution, as by law established, and the sole object to which he is pledged by becoming a member of the

and afterwards determining them by a reference to the caprice of Ministers. This was a practice very much to be avoided indeed, or it might be the death of the service. Why were not these points brought forward before a Court Martial?—

Constitutional Society, is to promote the knowledge of that same Constitution.

“ If in any particular proceeding, a society passes beyond the avowed principle of its union, the persons who compose the majority that decide the measure can alone be responsible for it. It is obvious that the censure which follows such a proceeding cannot attach upon those members, who being present when it was determined, opposed themselves to it, nor upon those who being absent had not the means of opposition.

“ Captain Gawler had not only never been present at any meeting whatever of the Constitutional Society, but has never in any manner given his assent or support to any resolutions adopted by that society.

“ Upon the whole, Captain Gawler persuades himself that those gentlemen who have signed the requisition will not feel themselves disposed, upon farther reflection, to press their request that he should withdraw himself from the society, since with such request he cannot comply without acknowledging—what he certainly does not acknowledge—the authority of those gentlemen, under the circumstances which he has stated, to interfere with him upon the subject.

“ If to belong to this society be in itself objectionable, Captain Gawler is informed that the objection applies to many other officers, and to many persons of rank and condition in the country.

“ Captain Gawler has ever professed, and now repeats, that so long as he remains in His Majesty's service, he shall think himself bound by his duty to shed his last drop of blood in defence of His Majesty's person and Government.”

On Tuesday, the 12th of December instant, the Adjutant of the regiment delivered to me the following intimation :

“ The officers of the 2d regiment of Life Guards have received Captain Gawler's answer to their requisition ; they had determined, before they applied to Captain Gawler, that the only substantial proof he could give of his principles being such as he has represented them, would be to withdraw his name and support from the society in question ; but as Captain Gawler has not thought proper to comply with the wish of his corps, they have resolved to lay the whole transaction before the Colonel of the regiment, with their proceedings thereon.”

On Saturday, the 22d of December instant, I received a note and enclosure from General Buckley, of which the following are copies :

“ Major General Buckley presents his compliments to Mr. Gawler, and incloses the orders given to the 2d regiment of Life Guards by Lord Amherst this day.”

*Grosvenor Street, Dec. 14, 1792.*

He had not the least doubt but that they might be so brought forward. He stated these things, because he really thought them subjects of grievance to the service, and would be finally detrimental to the interest of the people of this country, unless very soon and very well regulated indeed.

The SECRETARY AT WAR thanked the right honourable gentleman who spoke last for the candid manner in which he had admitted the prerogative of the Crown. The right the Crown had of dismissing any of its officers, without assigning a reason for it, was a right that was not doubted, and he should not say any thing farther upon that subject. As to the Court Martial to which the right honourable gentleman had alluded, he allowed that the noble Lords, and the other honourable officer, were certainly liable to a Court Martial; but it did not from thence by any means follow that they should not be dismissed without a Court Martial, if His Majesty should be so pleased to order. He should say no more upon this subject.

Mr. FOX admitted the prerogative of the King, as the Secretary at War had insisted on it; but then he said he must again maintain that it was a prerogative, the exercise of which it was the privilege, it was the duty of that House, to examine. With respect to the conduct of Captain Gawler, in refusing to erase his name from the Society alluded to, in compliance with the imperious orders of a number of officers, all of whom were inferior to himself, except one of them, he must say, that to make such a circumstance the foundation of dismissal was against all the principles of military distinctions, against the principles of justice, and highly injurious to the

Lord Amherst's orders, Dec. 14, 1792.

Parole, Lincoln.

"The King has been pleased to make the following promotion in the 2d regiment of Life Guards.

"Lieutenant Callard, Captain, vice Captain Gawler, who is permitted to receive the price of his commission.

"Cornet and Sub-Lieutenant Gosselin, Lieutenant."

This official notice of my dismissal was the only information I received on the subject, subsequent to the intimation of the subscribing officers, that they had resolved to lay the whole transaction before the Colonel of the regiment.

JOHN BALLENDEN GAWLER.

Staines, Dec. 22, 1792:

service. When he saw a meritorious gentleman dismissed the service in this way, without a reason, it gave him great concern, as well for the individual as for the service itself. He said again, this gentleman ought to have had a Court Martial ; but although Ministers had not assigned a reason for dismissing these officers, he would venture to say what were not the reasons for dismissing this gentleman. They did not dismiss them for want of an honourable character. No ! Caprice, founded upon political topics, was the sole reason.—With regard to Lord Edward Fitzgerald, his abilities and courage had been tried ; and he had acquitted himself to his honour, and to the satisfaction of the Public and of his most sanguine friends. Captain Gawler, too, had more than once signalised himself in the service. Mr. Fox here bore the most honourable and ample testimony of the meritorious conduct of all these dismissed officers, and concluded with observing, that the Ministers' reasons for dismissing them were such as they would not venture to assign.

Mr. BURKE entered at large into the nature of the King's prerogative to dismiss any of his officers without assigning a reason for it. It was a power wisely given to His Majesty by the Constitution, and was not to be called in question. He admitted the exercise of it might be abused, and when that was the case, that House ought to interfere ; but he did not think it so in the present instance. He then took notice of what Mr. Fox had said with respect to " the probability of a war " with a foreign power, in which case we should be armed." Here he agreed with Mr. Fox ; but with respect to the other part, where he said he thought " we might build on tranquillity at home," he differed from him widely, and observed, that he never knew an armament that was not applicable to both.—He then took a view of the ground of Mr. Fox's complaint, and after arguing for some time on the principles of public policy, he thought the conduct of these officers highly improper and unconstitutional ; for so appeared to him the raising of money by individuals, without the direction or consent of the King, and without the interference of Parliament, and to support a war against a power with whom we were actually in alliance. So forcibly did these points strike him, that, when he was applied to for a subscription for Poland, he

confessed that his heart was engaged in their favour; every thing that could move his affections pleaded in favour of Poland; but doubting so much on the point of propriety, he hesitated, and finally declined subscribing. He took notice of the case of Captain Gawler; he belonged to a Society, called a Society for Constitutional Information: there was no imputation upon Captain Gawler for being a Member of this Society at first, because the professions of its founders were harmless; but it had long since changed its original character, and now its Members held open correspondence with certain societies in France, for the express purpose of altering the Constitution of this country; a citizen of the name of Joel Barlow, another of the name of John Adams, and Citizen Frost, were engaged in this correspondence. He saw no reason why one of His Majesty's officers should object to erasing his name from such a Society. Upon all these considerations, he must say he was not ready to blame Government for what they had done. He thought that Government should judge of the conduct of its military officers by its own discretion, in the same way as a Jury judged of the tendency of a seditious libel; just as a Jury decided in the case of libels, so should the Crown of the conduct of its officers.

Mr. FOX explained, and observed, that, as to the subscription for France, the officers in question had only followed the example of the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) in the case of the Corsicans, for he was one of the subscribers, and so were the first and the best characters in this country; this the right honourable gentleman did not then think unconstitutional, although he had since discovered it to be so; but surely it was hard for an officer to be discharged for not knowing the Constitution better than Mr. Burke did twenty years ago. With respect to what he had hinted at as to an alliance, that was readily explained. Our alliance with the King of Prussia was a defensive alliance: if he should be attacked, we were bound to defend him; but it never occurred to him that we were bound to assist him in this offensive war against France, and therefore he did not send to us for assistance; nor did it occur to us that we were his allies in this case, for we did not offer him assistance. As to the Constitutional Society, it was well known that Captain Gawler never acted in it at all.



Why should not a gentleman erase his name? Why? If a gentleman feels himself commanded, as it were, by those who have no authority to do so, he is not likely to comply with the requisition, when enforced in such a manner. He must once more repeat, that these gentlemen ought to have had a trial by Court Martial.

Mr. BURKE said a few words in explanation.

After which the resolution was read and passed, and then the sum of 579,174*l.* 18*s.* 1½*d.* were granted to His Majesty for defraying the charges of the land forces for guards and garrisons, &c.

The House then went into a Committee on the Ordnance.

Several resolutions followed, and various sums of money were voted to defray the different expences; in the course of which

Mr. TAYLOR asked the Minister whether the building of barracks was included in any of these charges; for that whenever that came forward, he would take the sense of the House upon it.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that it had been deemed expedient to build several barracks, and that should make a separate article among the extraordinaries.

The sum of 449,000*l.* was voted for the Ordnance land service for the year 1793.

The Chairman reported progress. The report was ordered to be received on Wednesday.—Adjourned to Wednesday.

*Wednesday, 26th December.*

The ATTORNEY GENERAL moved the order of the day for the second reading of the bill to prevent the circulation in this country of assignats and other paper security under the authority of France. After a short conversation between Mr. Taylor and the Attorney General, this bill was read accordingly, and ordered to be printed.

On the third reading of the bill for prohibiting the exportation of corn, &c., under certain circumstances,

Colonel TARLETON took notice, that a certain firm had fitted out a ship laden with corn for exportation, which when they had done it was perfectly legal, but which now

they were prohibited from exporting by order in Council, he wished them to be indemnified.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, they ought to have an indemnity if their case should be made out.

The bill was then read a third time and passed.

Mr. TAYLOR gave notice that soon after the recess he should enter into a discussion of the propriety of the plan of building barracks in this country.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he was prepared to discuss at any time the propriety of building barracks, as a plan which he considered of the highest utility under the present circumstances of the country.

Mr. TAYLOR said, he should contend that it was a plan that could not be consonant to the feelings of Englishmen.

The House adjourned.

*Thursday, 27th December.*

On the motion of the ATTORNEY GENERAL, the House resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House on the bill to prevent the circulation of assignats, bonds, promissory notes, &c., for the payment of money, and issued under the authority of France.

Mr. TAYLOR allowed, that if there were any assignats in circulation, that circulation ought to be suppressed; but he wished to know whether if any foreigner, on his arrival in this metropolis, entirely ignorant, as the case was likely to be, of the nature of the present bill, with an assignat in his pocket, was to offer it at the house of Messrs. Theilsson and Co., or any other commercial house, he would or would not be liable to the penalties of the bill now before the House for circulating assignats.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL observed, that the general objects of complaint under the title of assignats were those for 3s. 6d. each, or some such trivial sums, which were now in circulation in this country. With regard to the question of his learned and honourable friend, he must declare he knew not where to draw a line of distinction without incurring the hazard of an evasion of the bill.

Mr. TAYLOR said, that, as a lawyer, he declared it to

be his opinion that the case to which he alluded could not be deemed a circulation.

The bill then passed the Committee, and the report was ordered to be received to-morrow.—The House adjourned.

*Friday, 28th December.*

The order of the day was put, that the Alien bill be read a second time.

The SPEAKER having read the different clauses of it,

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, that a great many words were not necessary upon the present occasion. In the existing circumstances, the motives and causes of the bill were so notorious, as not to require to be enumerated. He considered it, however, as his duty to come forward, in order to submit a few observations with respect to the nature and necessity of the present measure, and should for a very short time detain the attention of the House. So very great and extraordinary an influx of foreigners into this country must, at any time, have called for the attention of Government, and rendered some measures on their part necessary. That attention was still more requisite, and the necessity of adopting some particular measures was still more urgent, when it was considered that this influx of foreigners had come from a country which had lately been the scene of very extraordinary transactions—where their Constitution had been overthrown, the most convulsive proceedings taken place, and actions of the most dreadful enormity been perpetrated. In these transactions a very great number of the people, either from compulsion or inclination, had taken an active part. It was likewise to be considered, that the Revolution which had been brought about was not confined to the country itself where it had first originated; that it affected the whole of Europe, and was connected with principles which were directed against every Government, and consequently against the Government of this country. It became then a matter of serious attention, if the foreigners who had come into this country were influenced by those principles; and it was his duty not to conceal from the House, that many of those who had fled from their own country were liable to suspicion—many indeed had fled from persecution, and had come here for refuge from those scenes of calamity and violence

which they were compelled to witness in their own country ; but there were likewise many of a different description—many who had been engaged in those very transactions of cruelty and outrage which, he was confident, none would set their face to defend. And this was not all : it became matter of still more serious consideration, since there had been found men in this country so infatuated as to have adopted those very principles which, in the country where they originated, had overthrown the Constitution, and which were inimical to the principles of every Government. There existed likewise those, in the acting Government of that neighbouring country, who encouraged the addresses of the discontented and disaffected in this against our Constitution, and who published decrees tending to favour their views, and flatter them with hopes of support. When he had stated those circumstances, he trusted that it would not be thought that there was not sufficient ground for some degree of caution in the present moment. If it was allowed that there was ground for some measures to be taken, it would then only remain to be determined how far the measures brought forward by Ministers, on the present occasion, were too strong or too excessive.

He then briefly stated the several active clauses of the bill. It was intended, in the first instance, to make all foreigners, arriving in the kingdom, give an account of themselves—to make them explain or give up such arms as they may have in their possession ; he did not mean such arms as were natural for men or gentlemen to wear, but such as might naturally excite suspicion against the owners. It was also intended, that, in their several removals through the country, they should use passports, by which their actual residence, or occasional movements, might be notorious. For the same reason it was also intended to distribute those who received support into certain districts, where also they would be more liable to the cognizance of the civil power. Finally, it was proposed to pay particular attention to those foreigners who have come within the present year, or who may hereafter come without obvious reasons, and thus be rendered more liable to suspicion. He then entered into a detail of the particular regulations of the bill, which he concluded with stating, that he hoped the general principles upon which it was founded would, in the present

circumstances, be considered as moderate, and requisite to the safety of the State, and not giving a power to the executive government greater than the occasion justified. He trusted that the precautions which had been taken in giving this power would not be regarded as unreasonable, dangerous, or unnecessary. He had only one circumstance more to mention — that if he was called upon to state the grounds upon which he had founded his allegations, he would decline entering into any particular detail, and appeal to the general sense of the House to determine how far they were well founded. It must appear, in the present instance, that, with respect to a bill grounded on suspicion, and authorising the executive government to act upon that principle, it would be impossible, with any degree of propriety, to lay open the particular sources of information. Such a conduct would destroy the good effects which the bill was intended to produce; and therefore, though called upon in the course of the debate, he should be under the necessity to decline all explanation.

Sir GILBERT ELLIOT said, that it was always with extreme reluctance that he rose to speak—a reluctance which proceeded from a consciousness of his own incapacity to claim the attention of that House. This reluctance, however, he now particularly felt, upon the present occasion, from a different cause—a cause, however, of such a nature as compelled him, however unwilling, to come forward and avow his sentiments. The cause to which he alluded was a difference of opinion between him and some honourable friends whom he highly respected and esteemed. The painful sensations which arose from the necessity of avowing such a difference of opinion had already been described by other honourable gentlemen with more eloquence than he possessed; but this he should say, that none could more sincerely feel the pain of such a difference than he did. This difference of opinion, he trusted, however, could have no effect with regard to private friendship, which, he hoped, would ever remain unaltered. This sentiment he was more particularly led to express, as he had received distinguished marks of friendship from a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) with whom he was now compelled to express his difference in opinion; nor ought this difference even to produce any alteration in their way of thinking of each other as

public men ; for however they might disagree in sentiment, their motives were the same, and though the means which they proposed were different, the object which they all had in view was the same—the public good. On this occasion he felt himself prompted by duty to declare, that since the close of last session he had felt much regret from what had been said by the right honourable gentleman. The views which he entertained of the present situation of affairs were not only widely different from his own, but the means which he proposed to be pursued for the public welfare were such as appeared to him to be even of an opposite tendency. This difference of opinion was not respecting a particular measure, so as to afford him a hope that they might again reconcile their difference of sentiment, and be able to act together—it was a difference of such a nature as to affect their whole turn of thinking, and rendered their views respecting the mode of conduct which ought to be adopted in the present crisis diametrically opposite. He considered it as the duty of every man to stand forward in support of His Majesty's Government, and thus to maintain the Constitution, and to save the country. This difference of sentiment he should have felt still more painful, if, in avowing it, he had been compelled to stand alone. He trusted, however, that his sense of duty, and his regard for the public welfare, would have enabled him even to stand alone upon such an occasion, and would have supported him under all the uneasiness of such a situation ; but he was happy he did not stand alone. He spoke the same sentiments with many other honourable friends with whom he had been accustomed to act, and who still continued to act upon their ancient principles, and under their ancient leader (the Duke of Portland)—that illustrious personage whose character was so highly respected, and whose sentiments could never fail to have the greatest weight. The present bill met with his hearty and entire approbation, not on account of any particular facts which had been alledged, but on account of the general situation of the country. He considered it as an accession of power to the Crown, which was justified by the existing circumstances. It was, in his opinion, the character of a free Government to grant an extraordinary power in particular emergencies. If this extraordinary power was at all times to be possessed by the Crown, its power

would be too great for a free Government ; and if it was not to be granted when it was necessary, its power would be too small. He concluded by declaring, that he therefore gave his entire approbation to the precautions which had been taken by Ministers as highly necessary and proper in the present situation of affairs.

Mr. FOX said, that in speaking some things more than he should otherwise have thought himself called upon in terms to state, he trusted the House would indulge him for a few moments. In whatever political differences of opinion he felt himself with reference to his friends, he would venture to say, that in all discussions of such opinions he had never suffered the political difference to interfere with his private friendships ; yet he did feel some reason to complain that all the private friendship and esteem professed for him by the honourable Baronet should not have induced the honourable Baronet to state to him such political difference of opinion as he now said had existed so long, or that this should be the first occasion he had to suspect the least difference of opinion between the honourable Baronet and himself. The honourable Baronet now said, that so long ago as the last session of Parliament he had reason to differ in opinion from him, and now declared a general disapprobation of his political conduct. Till now he had never understood that there was, among those with whom he had been accustomed to act, a general difference of opinion from him, and a disposition to support the present Administration. He would call no man to account for his conduct ; but he would say that they had given him the most distinct assurances that there was nothing which made them more unwilling than they were formerly ; that they had expressed no disinclination to follow the same plan they had before adopted. He had indeed, on the first day of the present session, seen gentlemen go out into the lobby whom he could have wished to have staid in the House ; he had heard a right honourable friend of his (Mr. Windham) speak with that powerful eloquence which always distinguished him against what appeared to him to be the right and just course of proceeding, and he had heard him with pain ; but he saw no such difference of opinion as made it impossible for those gentlemen, or his right honourable friend, to preserve that connection in which they had acted so long.

With respect to himself, all he could say was, that he was as much devoted to that connection as any gentleman in that House; as any man of honourable and independent feelings could be. He said also, it was the pride of his heart to think, that the union and exertions of that connection had kept alive every thing that deserved the name of the spirit of liberty in this country. He wished not to call to mind particular expressions; but he could not but recollect that the difference between those with whom he had acted and the present Ministry, was formerly called fundamental and irreconcilable; and he did believe that this sentiment did still pervade the majority of them. Whether so or not, and whether his opinion was or was not consonant with the opinion of that majority, he did not know; but this he knew, that the case of his country would not suffer him to say he could support an Administration which stood upon the grounds of the present, upon grounds not warranted by the Constitution. He had heard, in this and other places, that the present Administration should be systematically supported at all events in the present situation of affairs. He blamed not those who said so, but with regard to himself, and those who entertained this opinion, union, and co-operation, were at an end. He had not heard the honourable Baronet say so much; for he was sure, that if the honourable Baronet had done so, he could not have added that he concurred in sentiment with the illustrious characters to whom he had alluded. The honourable Baronet had alluded to a noble person (Duke of Portland) so much esteemed by him (Mr. Fox) that he could not express what he felt in speaking of him; a nobleman with whom he had lived sixteen or seventeen years in friendship, and for ten of those he had been in habits of the greatest intimacy and affection; and he would venture to say he esteemed him at least as much as the honourable Baronet. He could not think that that nobleman entertained the opinion professed by the honourable Baronet; for he had heard that that nobleman, in giving his support to the present bill, had expressly declared that he could not forget the manner in which the present administration came into power, and that great part of the difficulties in which the country was now involved, was owing to their misconduct. He therefore believed that no essential difference existed between that noble person and himself.



If differences did arise from doubts that were entertained, he asked only for a fair discussion, that it might be distinctly known wherein it was they differed. He firmly believed, that on all the principles of liberty, they not only agreed in motives but in actions—that they agreed in every thing except the bill. He disapproved of this bill, and they approved, which was all the difference of which he knew. But as to other differences, and he was sure of no other, that subject must be farther discussed, and better understood between them. He had long acted, and he wished to continue to act with characters he esteemed; but if he should be driven, which God avert, to the situation of acting without, or against those characters, he hoped and trusted he should have sense enough to discern his duty, and fortitude to perform it. Painful as such a separation would be to him, and requiring his utmost fortitude to bear, he must then consider whether he should act alone, or not act at all. He trusted, however, he should act according to his own sense of duty, if he was compelled to do the one or the other. If, on the other hand, the difference on the present bill should be all the material difference between them, they might still act in conjunction, as they had formerly done, and he hoped that all attempts to magnify accidental differences, while they agreed on one general principle, would fail of their effect. There were other persons from whom he expected an entire difference on certain questions, and he had not been deceived. The right honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) who had condemned his former friends to banishment in Sinope, it might have been expected, considering the desolateness and sterility of the land, would have paused, would have thought that a sufficient punishment; but he had not done so. All that he could say was, that nothing should be wanting on his part, nothing of yielding or complying, nothing conciliating or friendly, no submission that friendship and old habits of intimacy could suggest, that he should not be ready to enter into, if, in his opinion, it could operate for the public good. Upon the present bill, as nothing had been alledged that could justify the principle, which he had no hope of opposing with success, and as it contained many provisions that could be better debated in a Committee, than in any other stage, he should reserve what he had to say till it came to that stage.

Mr. BURKE said, that although party connections were extremely proper for mutual arrangement in private, and convenience of public business, they were seldom fit to become the subject of public debate. No man was more unfit than he was to enter into any discussion of the state of parties. To talk of parties was, he remarked, a matter of particular delicacy, as the confidence of private friendship was often so much intermixed with public duty, that the transaction of parties required a sort of sanctity which precluded any disclosure. This delicacy was particularly increased, when friends, who loved and esteemed one another, in consequence of a difference of opinion, were compelled to pull different ways, and felt all the distraction natural to virtuous minds in such a situation. If he might be allowed to talk of himself, he might state, that ever since he came into Parliament, his doors had been open to all; none had been refused admittance, though the practice had been attended with much inconvenience to himself.

To the allusion about Sinope, he had nothing to answer.—The phalanx had sent him not to Sinope, but, in the common phrase, to Coventry. What endeavours had been used to make him odious to the Public, and to his private friends, all the world knew. Yet this Sinopian, this dog of Athens, had not barked from his tub. He had violated no principle, he had betrayed no secret, he had not attempted to come between the resolution and the act; and farther he had not to say. With regard to the noble person, in whom the public had a great interest, he should say nothing of his just character. The right honourable gentleman said he had known him for sixteen years; he had known him for twenty-seven; and if, for obvious reasons, they had not lately acted much together, he could say, that their friendship, if not improved, was not impaired. The public had a very great interest in the character of that noble person; his public virtues, the moderation of his sentiments, and the temperance of his private life, had made an impression which would not easily be obliterated.

To the right honourable gentleman he owed much for instruction, for improvement, and example; but the moment he saw him countenance these French affairs, and approve their principles, no public connection could subsist between them, because they differed systematically and fundamentally.

He must say, that any person who had seen the French business in the bud, and who now saw it fully blown and nurtured, and yet still wished to maintain any connection between France and this country, must, in every respect, meet with his entire disapprobation. On the present occasion, those who wished to support Government, must support it systematically. If it should be required to carry on a war, where could a systematical support be more necessary? War was itself a system, and for his part he had made up his mind not to give to Ministers a larger support and a larger opposition, but to support them systematically. Any other support would be merely treacherous, as it would only be given to a particular measure by those, who, at the same time, were endeavouring to undermine the general credit and character of Ministry. If the present state of affairs was such as to threaten not only this country but Europe, with most serious dangers, it was necessary, in order to avert these dangers, to adopt a system. The present bill was itself a strong proof of such a state of affairs, as it originated from circumstances which rendered it necessary to give additional power to the executive Government. The strong measure which Ministers had been obliged to adopt sufficiently proved the exigence of the crisis; and the bill itself formed part of a systematical support. For his part, though unconnected with party, he gave credit to Ministers for not meaning to betray their master, for not joining with foreign and domestic factions to subvert the Constitution. He gave them credit for knowing more facts, from the opportunities afforded by their official situation, than those who had not the same advantage; and therefore, he believed, that in the information which they had given of the danger of the country, they would not put upon the House a designed imposition. He would not say that he could not find other Ministers more agreeable to his inclination: he should wish to see that noble personage whom he had mentioned occupy a distinguished situation in the Ministry; but he doubted whether any Minister could be found more in the confidence of the Crown, which, in the present moment, he considered as a very material point. In a time of war, it was likewise very necessary that the Ministry should be supported by the House of Commons, and should possess the confidence of the people; two advantages which the

present Ministry enjoyed in a very eminent degree. In talking of the necessity of pursuing a system upon the present occasion, he would remark, that no country had ever acted so much upon a system as that which we are now called to oppose. He would here talk of two great characters, both of the most distinguished abilities, one of whom, (Mr. Fox) as having been twice Secretary of foreign affairs, had a claim to the character of a statesman, and who would certainly have proved himself a great statesman, even if he had never been placed in any official situation. The subject upon which that right honourable gentleman had said much, was France, which had lately appeared in a new and dangerous light; and on this subject he had certainly made use of a language very different from the policy of our fathers. France had always been considered as the natural enemy of this country; it was the only nation from which we had any thing to fear, and in this point of view was always to be considered as an object of jealousy and precaution. It was the former policy of this country to maintain a balance of power in opposition to France. With this view it was that they made the old alliance with the House of Burgundy, to which formerly belonged the seventeen provinces, which at present form the Republic of the United Provinces, and the Austrian Netherlands. With these provinces, in whatever hands they were, it had been invariably the policy of England to be connected, as furnishing the means of an effectual resistance to the power of France; and for this reason we had always made it a point to prevent even the Emperor to dispose of such of them as belonged to him to any other State. Since the extinction of the House of Burgundy in the male line, and the dismemberment of its possessions, the House of Austria had always been considered as the natural ally of England, because it was the only one capable of making head against the enormous power of France. During the reign of Joseph II., whose unaccountable disposition was not favourable to England, an alliance was formed with Prussia.

How much then must he be surprised, when a great Statesman declared that he rejoiced in the defeat of the Emperor and the King of Prussia—the Emperor, the ally of this country—the King of Prussia connected with it by marriage and by treaty. This indeed was a total deviation from the policy of our

ancestors. Nay, when this great Statesman required Ministers to interfere to prevent the Duke of Brunswick from entering France, and to join with our natural enemies against our allies and friends. There never were more solid, more substantial, more convincing reasons given for attacking any country, than those given in the manifesto which preceded, and justified the attack of the combined armies. The battle of Jemappes the right honourable gentleman had stiled a glorious victory—that victory by which France had become mistress of Holland; by which she had obtained possession of the Scheldt, which might now be the occasion of going to war. This glorious victory, in his opinion, was a calamitous defeat to this country. And why was all this exultation expressed? Because those combined against France were despots, and because France itself was a Republic. It was a new language, to call the friends and allies of this country despots. But here he begged leave to tell a short story: A very singular parrot was brought to Prince Maurice, which had acquired the gift of language. The Prince asked where it lived—it mentioned the place. What was its business—it replied, to call together the chickens, and I do it very well—chuck, chuck, chuck (imitating the cry employed to call chickens.)---Now he must own he considered the parrot who could call together the chickens, as a much greater statesman than the parrot which could only call out, fool, cuckold, and knave. As to the rejoicing in the success of a French republic, the liberty with which it was attended afforded certainly no great ground of exultation. It was a liberty without property, without honour, without morals, without order, without government, without security of life. In order to gain liberty they had forfeited order, and had thus forfeited every degree of freedom. They had violated the law of nations by a decree, declaring war against all Governments, and forcing those countries, into which their armies should enter, to form a constitution similar to their own. In talking of the English nation, they talked of the sovereignty of the people; the constitution of this country knows no such sovereignty; the King is Sovereign of the Lords and of the Commons; the King, Lords, and Commons are the representatives of the country at home; the King is its only representative abroad. They talk of the nation; we know of no nation

as a distinct body from the representative powers. We talk indeed of the people, but "the sovereignty of the people" is a phrase not recognised by law, and inconsistent with our constitution.

Mr. Burke then animadverted at some length on the decree made by the National Convention upon the report of M. Cambon. The decree was preceded by a curious declaration. "The National Convention, after having heard the report of the United Committees of Finance. War, and diplomatic, faithful to the principles of the sovereignty of the people, which will not permit them to acknowledge any institution derogatory from it," &c.---Here, Mr. Burke insisted, was a direct denunciation of war against Great Britain. The National Convention will not acknowledge any institution derogatory from the sovereignty of the people. The decree contained twelve articles, the first evinced the intentions of the National Convention, "to abolish all taxes, nobility, and every privilege; to declare to the inhabitants of all countries, that they bring with them peace, succours, fraternity." The system of fraternizing was to be propagated by the sword, and if any nation wished to adhere to its old maxims, those regenerators were to cram this fraternity down their throats, and to force them to swallow the dose, however nauseous it may be to them. The fourth article authorized the republic to seize all goods belonging to the treasury, the Prince, his favourers, adherents, or satellites. A pretty ample word of confiscation the last was. The sixth article appointed commissioners to fraternize the conquered nation. The seventh provided for the payment of the expences incurred by the republic, in giving fraternity to any nation. This sufficiently evinced the resolution of the French not to fraternize mankind gratis. Under the pretext of giving full liberty to those people, they sent their commissioners to take care that the decree should be fulfilled; and authorized the levying of contributions, in order to defray their own expences; thus exhibiting a more arbitrary and oppressive conduct, even than those whom they affected to call despots, who had on several occasions respected the constitution of those cities which they had invaded, and who had left the different classes of citizens in possession of their privileges. But he should now read to the

House, a paper in which this country was still more deeply interested. He then proceeded to read, a translation of the report of the French Minister, on the situation of France with respect to England. Upon that passage which mentions the reciprocity of good dispositions between the people of the two nations, he remarked that this was a serious fact which deserved to be attended to. This report, he observed, mentions agents not acknowledged by the Court, whom they kept in England: there was one Minister whom he knew, M. Chauvelin, who had been Minister from the King of France, but who consequently was not now acknowledged. With respect to the Ministers having had communications with any such agents, it might be necessary, from political causes, for Ministers to have communications with the worst characters; but surely that these agents were numerous, was matter of serious alarm, while the nature of their mission, and the purposes for which they are employed, remained unknown. What answer does the French Minister give to the arguments employed by our Court against the opening of the Scheldt? Their answer is founded on the rights of nature and on the principles of justice and liberty, which the French nation have consecrated; the only consecration, he remarked, which they had made. When *our Ministers alledged the positive engagements of treaty*, it was replied, *treaties extorted by avarice, and consented to by despotism*, were no longer binding. So by this means they got rid of the law of nations, and the obligation of treaties. On the passage which relates to their intention of making a solemn appeal to the English nation, he remarked that they passed by the King, the only representative which this country knew in its transactions with foreign powers. This was exactly conformable to the spirit of their decree of the 19th of December, which has a direct tendency to excite rebellion among the subjects of every Government. The conduct of the French, he remarked, in levying contributions on those people whom they had deprived of all their privileges, on pretext of defraying their own expences, resembled that of an Attorney who should bring in a bill of costs after he had stripped his client of all his property. From this account of expences, he trusted they would deduct the thousand pair of shoes which had been sent them from England as a first subsidy, from those who wished

to adopt their constitution in this country. The French when they were slaves had wooden shoes—now that they are free they have no shoes at all. The liberality of their English friends however promises to supply the defect. He defied any one to mention instances of such excesses under any despotism in so short a space of time, as had taken place under this new Government of French freedom. During thirty years of the reign of the Empress of Russia, there had not been committed so many cruelties as had been perpetrated in France within one week. No such instances of arbitrary imprisonment had occurred under the reign of the King of Prussia, as might be found in the transactions of every French municipality. Every man's house was his bastille, and nothing in the old Government could be found to equal the atrocity of those proceedings, which had taken place under the sanction of the new Government of French freedom.

Mr. Burke next adverted to the system of atheism, as now avowed in France. To prove this, he quoted several passages from a speech of one Jacob Dupont, to the National Convention, in which he denied the existence of God, and declared that the people would never be thoroughly ripe for the “ holy doctrines of insurrection, and opposition to tyranny,” if in the primary schools, the rising generation should be taught any thing about God. He concluded, that the Christian religion being a monarchical one, preaching subjection and obedience to God, ought not to be suffered in a republic; and that all the altars raised to religion, and to the Almighty, ought to be overturned, and none suffered to exist in France, but the “ Altar of Liberty,” the sacred “ Tree of Liberty.” When some murmurs were heard in the Assembly, on account of this abominable doctrine, they were drowned by the loud applause of the majority of the Members. This daring man observing, that some people might imagine that a priest might be useful to a man in his last moments, that some people might imagine, that a priest, in the same situation, might be desirable to administer spiritual consolation; this he denied; and to such people he would point out Condorcet closing the eyes of d'Alembert; in other words, one atheist closing the eyes of another. He said, that the brave Marseillois would not have been so well qualified for the glorious deeds of the 10th of Au-



gust, if they had had the weakness to believe in the existence of a God. The man who uttered these blasphemies, so far from having been disavowed by the Assembly, was appointed one of a Committee instituted for the purpose of drawing up a plan for national education ; and the only difference of opinion among the Members of the Convention was, which plan of education would be most economical, that which proscribed the existence of a God, or that which admitted it. Mr. Burke described the benefits which society in general derived from the morality founded upon the belief of the existence of God, and the comforts which individuals felt in leaving this world, in the hope of enjoying happiness in the next. He mentioned the church of St. Genevieve at Paris, one of the finest buildings in the world, which was now called the French Pantheon, because all the statues of the ancient Gods and heroes of antiquity were to be taken from Rome, and deposited in that famous temple ; there strangers from all quarters were to be instructed in the best mode of destroying the Government and religion of their respective countries ; there they were to be taught how to lead on men imperceptibly from crime to crime, from murder to murder. The philosophers of old used to apply the origin of every thing to God—a *Jove principium*. But the modern French philosophers would begin by saying that every thing had been made by nothing ; and that the idea of a God was weak, childish and absurd, and unbecoming a true republican. The trees of liberty were to be the only altars before which the nations were to kneel.

“ And all about old stockes and stubs of trees,  
Whereon nor fruit nor leaf was ever seen,  
Did hang upon the ragged rocky knees,  
On which had many wretches hanged beene,  
Whose carcases were scattered on the greene,  
And throwne about the cliffs.”

(*Spencer's Fairy Queene, Canto, 9th.*)

These trees of liberty, he doubted not, would soon be without fruit or leaf ; and it would soon be said, that on them

“ Had many wretches hanged beene.”

Thus after having brought so many calamities on individuals, they wished to deprive them of their last consolation ; they

wished to deprive the pious and penitent of their sole refuge, and if possible to extinguish the idea that there is a God who will punish tyrants and oppressors, and who will reward and comfort suffering virtue. Thus, after having made men miserable in life, they wished also to make them despair in death, and consign them to all the horrors of a gloomy annihilation. Such were the principles upon which they were to form their youth, and train them to the commission of crimes, by taking away from them the salutary restraints of religion. For his part, Mr. Burke said, he was determined to wage eternal war with this abominable principle, which would drive morality out of the world, and cut asunder the bonds which unite man to man, and the creatures to their Creator!

Adverting lastly to the bill immediately before the House, he said, he would give it his most cordial support, as being calculated to keep out of England those murderous atheists, who would pull down the State and Church; religion and God; morality and happiness. The extraordinary power which it would give Ministers was necessary, and even proved that the people who gave it were free; for if the Crown possessed such power in time of peace, it would be too great for liberty; and if they had not more in time of war than was necessary in time of peace, they would not have enough for the public safety. Where the Crown had its power enlarged or diminished by the people, according to times and circumstances, here the people could not be justly said to live under despotism, but to be perfectly free. It had been said on a former occasion that there were only nineteen persons at present in the kingdom likely to be affected by the bill; but when it was considered that they were murderers and atheists, the number might be said to be very great; they exceeded by many the whole of the Royal family, whom they might perhaps be commissioned to murder. Besides they might take apprentices to the trade of blood; and then God only could tell where their numbers would end. The persons by whom so many murders were committed in France never exceeded two hundred; though their assistants and abettors amounted to many thousands; but those believed that there was no God; and therefore people ought not to be at their ease because we had at present only nineteen of them among us. He mentioned the circumstance

of 3000 daggers having been bespoke at Birmingham by an Englishman, of which 70 had been delivered. It was not ascertained how many of these were to be exported, and how many were intended for home consumption [Here Mr. Burke drew out a dagger which he had kept concealed, and with much vehemence of action threw it on the floor.] This, said he, pointing to the dagger, is what you are to gain by an alliance with France: wherever their principles are introduced, their practice must also follow: you must guard against their principles; you must proscribe their persons. He then held the dagger up to public view, which he said never could have been intended for fair and open war, but solely for murderous purposes. "It is my object," said he, to keep the French infection from this country; their principles from our minds, and their daggers from our hearts. I vote for this bill, because I consider it the means of having saved my life and all our lives, from the hands of assassins; I vote for it, because it will break the abominable system of the modern Pantheon, and prevent the introduction of French principles and of French daggers. When they smile, I see blood trickling down their face; I see their insidious purposes; I see that the object of all cajoling is—blood! I now warn my country to beware of those execrable philosophers, whose only object is to destroy every thing that is good here, and establish immorality and murder by precept and example.

*"Hic niger est, hunc tu Romane caveto."*

Mr. J. T. STANLEY rose, and expressed his approbation of the bill on the table, though aware of the unusual power it would convey, if passed, to the executive Government. The circumstances of the time, he observed, required such power to be given: they were extraordinary circumstances, and he was surprised that they had been considered so very differently by different people, and that on the subject of the bill there was not an unanimity of opinion.

Those gentlemen who apprehended danger or inconveniences in the passing of the bill, should well weigh in their minds, against them, the danger and inconveniences which might arise if no such bill were passed. Ought the executive Government, he would ask, to remain, in such times as the present, without a power of controlling foreigners, and of guarding against their

designs? Could any gentleman say, on his honour, he believed that the continuance of so many foreigners as were in the country, uncontrolled, was without danger? It was notorious, there were among them some, who had come from the Continent for the sole purpose of doing mischief here, of exciting discontent, and of purchasing, if they could, amongst our own people, abettors of their designs. Within a few days of the time he was speaking, Mr. Stanley said, members of the actual Convention of France had been in town. Was it to be supposed (knowing, as the House did, the principles of that Convention) that such men had abandoned their stations to pay us a visit, for good purposes? There had been assassins in London; they still remained in it. The same who had been employed at Paris on the dreadfully-memorable second of September. Was it a matter of no importance, whether such men remained in this country, or were sent out of it? Mr. Stanley said, he thought it a subject of infinite importance; and with as much earnestness as a right honourable Member (Mr. Burke) had done, he thanked the Minister for the bill. But it was one only of many measures for which he thanked him; it was one of a system of measures which, Mr. Stanley asserted, in his belief, had served the country from destruction.

He said, that with respect to the bill, more particularly considered, the power it would give should be exercised with the greatest attention. The foreigners, over whom so much power was intended to be given, were of very different descriptions: many of them were undoubtedly men deserving of punishment and severe treatment; but others were in a great degree deserving of protection, kindness, and hospitality. These last were the reverse of those, who at present governing France, were so justly the objects of execration. They were the oppressed, the others were the oppressors. They were exiled, unfortunate gentlemen, who came to England, as to their last asylum, to escape persecution. They were whatever France had possessed that was virtuous and dignified; they adored the God, the others had abjured. They were the devoted victims whose hearts were to be pierced with the daggers the others were to wield. Over men so different, so differently circumstanced, the power given was to be differently exercised; and Mr. Stanley said, he was sure the House would join with him,

when he recommended to the protection of the Minister, a class of foreigners, in so many respects the contrary of these emissaries who were sent here to plot mischief and foment rebellion, and would with him consider them as a trust committed to his care ; and that with them was committed to him the duty of maintaining the character of benevolence, which Englishmen had acquired, and in which they so justly gloried.

But to have said so much, that appeared like pleading in favour of these unfortunate foreigners, to have thus recommended them to the attention of Ministers, was perhaps having paid an ill and undeserved compliment to the goodness of their hearts, and that required some apology. He would plead in excuse, he said, an illiberal language he had heard in many companies, respecting the French emigrants. They were all indiscriminately called enemies ; and with an unpardonable levity, men permitted themselves to say, that none, however distressed, however hostile, or opposite in principle to the prevailing opinions in France, were either to be received into this country, or treated with kindness when in it. They ought not, it was said, to be allowed to remain in it ; they were Frenchmen ; it was a reason sufficient for them to be sent away. If it was asked, whither they should go ? how they should go ? it was answered, any where, any how, provided they did but go. Such language, Mr. Stanley said, was inhuman ; it did neither honour to those who used it, or to the country in which it was used ; and yet it had been common, or he would not have thought it deserving of his attention. Would men, Englishmen, drive their fellow-creatures into the sea for protection ? and if kindness were refused these exiles, to where beyond the sea could they go ? He had risen to reprobate such language, and, in a public manner, to prevent, if he could, the impression it might make on the minds of those, who, from a want of reflection, were easily influenced by any language they were exposed to hear often. It was the duty of every man, he thought, to check early prejudices that might spread against a number of distressed, hapless strangers, unfeelingly and thoughtlessly classed with the most worthless of their countrymen.

Having said thus much, Mr. Stanley said, the object for which he had risen had been accomplished ; but he could not refrain, before he sat down, from congratulating the House on

the unanimity of sentiment, in many respects, which prevailed in it, and in the country ; for the exceptions to the prevailing sentiment were few. If we were to be exposed to contest with France, it promised us success. On a great occasion like the present, it was glorious to see all differences of opinion on subordinate subjects laid aside, and men, accustomed to oppose each other in politics, uniting their efforts against the common enemies of the State ; and the opponents of Ministry exerting their endeavours to strengthen Government, and enable it to meet successfully its present difficulties. So many respectable leaders of the opposite party ceasing, at this critical period, to cavil with the measures of the executive Government, when an obstruction to them might be fatal to the safety of the country, reminded him of Shakespeare's words, with which, Mr. Stanley said, he would conclude :

“ Now these our princes are come home again,  
“ Come the three corners of the world in arms,  
“ And we shall shock them. Nought shall make us rue,  
“ If England to herself will be but true.”

The bill was then read a second time, and committed for Monday next. The House adjourned.

*Monday, 31st December.*

The order of the day for going into a Committee upon the Alien bill being read, and the question being put, that the Speaker do now leave the chair,

Sir PETER BURRELL said, that he rose upon a probability that the present bill, the principle of which seemed to be unanimously approved, and the necessity of which was only denied by a few, would not be much opposed. He considered himself as particularly bound to rise upon the present occasion, as he differed in opinion with those with whom he had been accustomed to act, and especially with one right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox), for whose great abilities he entertained the highest respect, and of the purity of whose motives he could not harbour the smallest doubt. As he, however, not only approved of the principle of the bill, but considered it as a measure highly necessary in the present period, and fully justified by the existing circumstances, he now rose to state the ground of this difference of sentiment, and vindicate the motives of

his separation from those with whom he had formerly agreed in opinion. He should make no apology for not having given any previous intimation of this difference which he now avowed, as he had had no private conversation on the subject, nor was he bound by any intimacy to make such communication. He considered himself as now only acting as a public man, as called upon by the duty which he owed in that capacity to come forward and avow those sentiments which he really entertained, and adopt that line of conduct which he conceived to be most conducive to the public welfare. In the present situation of affairs, where the existing circumstances upon which he founded his approbation of the bill were so plain and notorious, it was unnecessary for him to go into any enumeration. The question now was not who should govern, but whether there should be any Government at all; not who should be Minister, but whether there should be a Ministry. While we were quarrelling about the shadow, the French were endeavouring to deprive us of the substance. Had gentlemen really considered the nature of the question? The sort of war which the French carried on, was a war not of insult, but of extirpation. It was a war which had for its object to erect their own system on the ruins of every other Government. It became necessary, then, that the French should be acquainted with the real state of the sentiments of the People of this country, that they might know how little they had to hope from the progress of their doctrines in this quarter. This effect he thought the present bill calculated to produce. And here he begged leave to call the attention of the House to the new articles of that new law of nations which the French had thought proper to set up. Instructions were given to their generals in all those countries which their armies should enter, to deprive of all their immunities the privileged orders and their satellites. This phrase, which they had introduced, of satellites, gave a broad scope for the exercise of this arbitrary privation. Now, the possession of property he considered as one of those privileges of which they were to be deprived. People in this country might hesitate to believe that by this decree they intended a general confiscation of all property; but let them look to their practice, that would best explain their meaning. They mentioned the degree of poverty which should entitle the inhabi-

tants to an exemption from this privation of privileges: they argued that under the Government which they introduced there was no occasion for property; and, provided they adopted a system contrary to all their former principles and opinions, generously allowed them to continue poor. To what purpose had they laid down declarations, to which they had on no occasion shewn any inclination to adhere? There were one or two circumstances relative to French affairs which he thought had not been sufficiently urged, and to which he begged to call the attention of the House. He would first remark the different gradations of French freedom, the progress which had taken place from one extreme to another. It had been the fate of every patriot, however wild in his notions of liberty, to be considered as a favourer of despotism by another still wilder than himself. Hence one extreme had been followed up by another without end. All who were in any degree moderate in their sentiments had been doomed to poverty, exile, and death. Intrinsic worth had been the object of unrelenting persecution. The man who planted the tree of liberty with one hand, held in his other hand a dagger to stab any who should differ from him in opinion. What, in the first instance, had been liberty recovered, had terminated in the establishment of the most complete anarchy. He was not afraid that any of the consequences of this frightful disorder should reach this country; he was too well assured from the dispositions of the people, and the spirit of attachment which had discovered itself to the Constitution. But he considered the present bill as a measure calculated to maintain tranquillity and confidence. By vigorous measures of preparation, accompanied with a spirit of unanimity, we should best provide against whatever might happen, and whatever part we should be compelled to take, would be enabled to act with advantage. On this account he highly approved of the present bill, as putting into the hands of the Crown a power fully warranted by the present crisis, and the exercise of which might be attended with the most salutary consequences.

Sir GILBERT ELLIOT said, that although he was not sure he was in order, he took that opportunity to do that which, if proper to be done at all, should be done without delay. On a former occasion he expressed some things in which



he had the honour of claiming the concurrence of many, and more particularly that of a noble person, (the Duke of Portland) in which he had no doubt he was distinctly authorized. He was now very desirous that no error should arise from that statement. It was a particular line of conduct which he considered it his duty to follow, which he then stated, and which he then said he would follow if he stood alone. The opinion he expressed was precisely this: That it was the duty of every man, in and out of Parliament, in the present situation of affairs, to afford the government a fair and honourable support in defending the Constitution. That was the sentiment he expressed; and which, in his own mind, he said, he had no doubt was a sentiment in which he had the approbation of that noble person. This was all he expressed, or intended to express. He understood, however, that others had understood him differently: what his own intentions were he knew, and his friends knew; others knew how they understood him; but that subject ought not to be left in doubt; and therefore he had said thus much to remove it. He also understood from some, that from what he had said on that occasion, he conveyed to them an idea that the noble person alluded to had given his approbation to all the sentiments which he (Sir Gilbert) expressed that night. That was not his intention. He declared his opinion upon the subject, and he said he would not disguise his feelings from himself, nor would he disguise them from the House; but he did not wish to say that such were the feelings of any other person. That no doubt might remain upon that point, he begged leave to refer to what he did say on that part of the subject also. He said that he had reflected on the opinion of the right honourable gentleman, (Mr. Fox) and others who had acted with him; he said, that comparing these with his own opinion upon the state of this country, he could not disguise from himself, that the difference was too great for him to hope for a general concurrence, while things remained in the state they were in at present. These were the sentiments which he then expressed. He did not understand that any other man in that House gave his full approbation to these sentiments. He did not intend to say, nor did he say, that the noble person alluded to went to the full extent of approving all he had said upon that subject. He had no inten-

tion to say so ; he thanked God for it. To the right honourable gentleman, (Mr. Fox) indeed, these things were of no importance, but to him (Sir Gilbert) they certainly were of moment. It was an ease to his mind to declare his opinion, and to explain this matter, in which he had been understood. Indeed, the sense he had of the importance of his public duty, he would say again, would make him speak his mind, even if he stood alone ; and that duty called upon him, in his opinion, to confide in His Majesty's Ministers, on this occasion, to support the Constitution. This was all he had to say at present. If from any thing that might be said by any other person, he should think a farther explanation necessary, he hoped the House would be pleased to indulge him with a hearing.

The MARQUIS of TITCHFIELD said, it was with great pleasure that he had heard what had just fallen from his honourable friend (Sir G. Elliot) who, in expressing the sentiments of others as well as his own, did not seem to have said any thing in which he could not readily concur. His Lordship said, he agreed that the circumstances of the country were in the highest degree critical, and in such circumstances those who were as little inclined to think well of the present Administration as himself, might be disposed to such a conduct in some instances, as at other times they would not be inclined to pursue. His political sentiments and attachments remained the same that they had ever been. His opinion of the gentlemen who composed the present Administration, was in no respect altered. But he felt the dangers which surrounded us, and the necessity, in that case, of giving to Government such support as might enable it to act with effect ; a support, therefore, directed to that effect, and governed by those considerations, was that which he meant distinctly to give them. The bill under consideration he conceived to be one of those measures, and therefore it should have his support. But in declaring those intentions, which, as he had already said, were formed on his opinion of the crisis in which the country stood—a crisis which he must attribute, in a great measure, to the misconduct of the present Ministers—his Lordship added, that he could not too explicitly declare, that in no other respect could he give them any share of his confidence ; and that he

could not too openly avow his attachment to those political principles and connections, with which he had the happiness of entering into public life, and to which it was his sincere wish for ever to adhere.

Sir M. W. RIDLEY paid several handsome compliments to the Members of Opposition for their abilities and integrity. He observed, that he had frequently acted with them, and had no doubt that he should again; but the reason why he supported the present measure was, because he thought the country and the Constitution in some degree in danger, and he thought the present bill had some provisions to protect the State. This line of conduct, on this particular measure, was totally independent of any system of political connection; and he felt no regret in pursuing it, except that those with whom he usually acted should not see it in the same light as he did. He thought no apology necessary for discharging what he conceived to be a public duty.

Mr. FOX observed, he should trouble the House but with a very few words. What he chiefly had to observe was on what had been expressed by a noble Marquis in the course of this debate. He thought it rather unnecessary to take much notice of what had been expressed on the feelings of others on a former day. The whole subject had been explained by the noble Marquis with so much propriety, dignity, and perspicuity, that he could not entertain a doubt upon his principles and sentiments. He had so properly come forward to state his opinion as a Member of that House, (which by the way was more regular than alluding to the opinion of other persons who were not Members) that no doubt could now remain; all that he had to say on that subject was, that he concurred entirely with the noble Marquis in every thing he had said this night, except the approbation of the present bill. There might be some explanation upon that subject in the Committee; he therefore only said, that the Committee might, perhaps, be the proper stage for him to deliver his thoughts upon the subject. At present, he must confess, he was not ready to give his assent to the bill. He was not surprised that there was a difference of opinion between the noble Marquis and himself upon the present bill. They had formed different opinions on the state of the country: the noble Marquis had thought the country in

danger, and therefore very properly thought that the executive power should be strengthened, and voted for the present bill. He, on the contrary, was not aware of such danger, and saw no necessity for the bill, and therefore, when the case was thus explained, it was not surprising that they differed in opinion. He then observed, that what fell from the honourable Baronet (Sir Peter Burrell) was fair and manly, and he hoped and trusted the House would do him the justice to believe that he never had been accustomed to require any thing like an apology from any who formerly agreed, and afterwards differed from him in opinion ; such a disposition was opposite to the whole tenor of his life.

The bill now before the House must, he apprehended, be discussed on two grounds. The first was, " Whether any danger does exist in this country ? " If that was determined in the negative, there would be an end of the bill : if in the affirmative, then, secondly, " Whether the present bill contains provisions for the proper remedy for such danger ? " — The present was not a question of general support of Administration, as had been very erroneously stated : it was whether any thing was necessary in the present case ; and if any thing was necessary, " Whether the present bill was adapted to the end proposed ? " He was ready to say, that if the circumstances of the time were such as Ministers described them to be, it would be necessary for him to support Government, and he would support Government if there was really danger in this country. He was always ready to support Government when he thought it wanted support. As a proof of this, he had given his vote for the augmentation both of the army and navy this year. He had done that because he believed this country was threatened with external danger. But he did not believe that there was any internal danger, and therefore it was that he opposed the present bill. If Ministers would prove the internal danger to exist, he would consider himself bound to vote for the present bill. This was all he had at present to say upon the subject before the House. He was happy, however, to have it in his power to observe, that there was no other difference in opinion between the noble Marquis, and others with whom he acted, and himself, than that which arose from the present bill ; that could not make any real difference

of opinion generally between those who were, and had long been connected, not only by the ties of private friendship, but by common principles and sense of public duty.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that he believed he could save the House some time, which was by observing, that the better way would be to pass the bill through the Committee to-night, and receive the report, and as the right honourable gentleman's objections were to the bill generally, to hear them on the third reading.

Colonel HARTLEY observed, that he had often withheld his confidence from Ministers, because he saw no ground laid down for his giving it. But as he believed the country to be at this time in danger, whatever opinion he might have of Administration, he thought he could not do better than confide in them in the present instance, and to give his assent to the present bill. When the danger was over, the House would expect Ministers to give a very good account of the whole proceedings, and if they did not satisfy the House, proper steps could be taken to express disapprobation; but at present, under all circumstances, he was for passing the bill now before the House, as the best measure that could be adopted.

The House then resolved itself into a Committee; Mr. Serjeant Watson in the chair.

Mr. SHERIDAN proposed to exempt ladies from the restrictions of the bill, which he said would not defeat the object of it, and would shew that the age of chivalry was not gone in this country, whatever might have become of it any where else.

Mr. BURKE said, that if the ladies would lay aside the modern spirit of chivalry, he should have no objection; but that such ladies as attended Mr. Dumourier, and the other unbreeched heroes of France, were as dangerous as any of the persons that the bill was meant to provide against.

The amendment was negatived.

Mr. FOX expressed his desire to know what was the nature of the banishment. Was it to be a transportation to Botany Bay, or elsewhere? and under what circumstances was it to be enforced?

Mr. PITT explained, in a few words, the particular circumstances to which the banishment was to apply.

The MASTER OF THE ROLLS stated, that the nature of the banishment was to depend on His Majesty's pleasure.

Mr. COURTENAY, after the reading of the second clause, which provides against the importation, by foreigners, of arms, ammunition, &c., moved that the words "or her" should be introduced after the word "his." He said, that, considering the great alarm and terror which gentlemen seemed to labour under of the prowess of the French ladies, he must appeal to the House whether his amendment was not necessary — that some gentlemen on the other side of the House should be alarmed at the attacks of the fair sex he was not surprised; but that a certain right honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) should direct his attacks against them astonished him, considering the country that gave him birth, the attachment of whose natives to the fair sex was so finely described by the Poet:

" From Dublin, fam'd in legends of romance,  
" For mighty magic of enchanted lance,  
" With which her heroes, arm'd, victorious prove,  
" And rush like torrents o'er the land of Love."

The consternation and terror of those Amazons had spread like a contagion through the town, and seized the Board of Aldermen, who, in the excess of their panic and patriotism, became volunteers, and doubtless would strike equal terror into the French, for he must consider them as valiant soldiers, possessing, as they did, so much wealth; for certainly, if not able to fight, they were able to buy the whole French army. A good man on 'Change meant a rich man. If a rich man and a good man were synonymous, he thought the valiant man and a rich man must be so too. And by this reasoning it was conclusive, that the honourable Board of Ordnance were brave soldiers. He said, that, exclusive of the safety of the nation, he had another point in view in this motion, which was the Stocks; for he was certain that if the amendment he proposed for depriving the French emigrant ladies of their arms was not adopted, the fear of them would have an unhappy effect upon the funds, and they would certainly fall 10 per cent. He said he would make no apology to his right honourable friends (as other gentlemen had done) for supporting the Minister in this instance, and acting conformably to the dictates of his con-

science; he thought apologies of that sort were an insult to the dignity of the House.

Mr. DRAKE was offended at the honourable gentleman's levity, and launched into a warm declaration of his sense of the importance of the crisis, and his love for the people.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL admitted the propriety of the amendment, and it was adopted.

General SMITH, after declaring that he approved of the principle of the bill, desired to know whether or not it was meant to deprive officers of their arms. He had a representation from three officers who had been deprived of their arms at the Custom House.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, the arms brought by aliens into this country were not to be forfeited, but to be at the disposal of the Crown, and in all fit cases they would be returned. He should thank the honourable General, if, in another place, he would give him the names of the officers who had applied to him.

On the passport clause a difficulty arose about the interpretation of the words "alien merchant," and it was agreed that it should be defined in the bill by a clause to be added on the report.

On the clause which empowers the Secretary of State to send any alien out of the kingdom on suspicion,

Mr. SHERIDAN, supported by Mr. Baker, proposed to except all who were resident in the kingdom before January, 1792, as the suspicions on which the bill was founded were not said to extend but to those who had come into the kingdom since that period.

To this it was answered, that aliens who had resided in the kingdom for some time were the persons with whom aliens, coming into the kingdom with evil designs, would most naturally connect themselves.

Mr. Alderman WATSON said, that alien merchants, who had been long resident in the kingdom, were, to his knowledge, among the most dangerous persons.

This gave rise to a discussion on the King's prerogative to send aliens out of the kingdom, however long they may have been resident in it.

Mr. MITFORD and Mr. WIGLEY seemed to consider the prerogative as undoubted.

The SOLICITOR GENERAL had no doubt of the prerogative to prevent aliens from coming into the country ; the more he considered the prerogative to send aliens out of the country, the less doubt he entertained ; and did he imagine that the present bill tended to surrender that prerogative, he would not consent to it.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, this was a consideration of importance, and would be better debated on the report.

Several amendments, in point of form, were made ; the Attorney General brought up several additional clauses ; the report was received, and ordered to be taken into consideration to-morrow.

*Tuesday, 1st January.*

There not being, at 4 o'clock, a sufficient number of Members present to make a House, an adjournment of course took place.

*Wednesday, 2d January.*

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS rose, to call the attention of the House to a subject which would certainly be considered of material importance : he meant the late rainy season in the North of Scotland, and the consequent scarcity of grain, but more particularly of fuel. It was no less true, than lamentable, that from want of coals in that part of the country, the labour of the poorer class of people was constantly employed, during the whole summer, in providing fuel for the winter.— But the late wet season had, in a great measure, destroyed the only means they had of providing fuel : he therefore rose to give notice, that he meant soon after the adjournment, to bring forward a motion for leave to bring in a bill to allow coal in Scotland to be carried coastways, without paying the present legal duties. And he hoped this might be done, without occasioning any defalcation in the revenue, as another tax might be imposed on some other article to produce that sum, and the burden of which would not be felt ; as, in fact, the present high duties operated nearly to a prohibition, that he believed the annual revenue arising from these duties, did not exceed 10,000*l*. Mr. Dundas said, these considerations



had determined him to bring the matter before Parliament; and in that view, in order to procure as full information as possible, he had written an official letter before he left Scotland, to the Sheriffs of the different counties on the subject; and he concluded with moving "That there be laid before this House, a copy of a letter written by His Majesty's principal Secretary of State for the home department, to the Sheriffs of the different counties in Scotland in November last, respecting the late harvest and the different articles of fuel, and also copies of the reports or answers received from them."

Mr. ADAM rose to give his most hearty approbation to the motion of the right honourable Secretary so far as it went.--- The distressful state of the North of Scotland with respect to the article of fuel was well known to every gentleman acquainted with that part of the country, and the present high and unequal duties on coal, had long been the subject of general and just complaint. He hoped, therefore, that the proposition of the right honourable Secretary would not be confined to giving a temporary relief, but would go to the establishing a proper permanent regulation. Mr. Adam then mentioned the effect of the late harvest, with respect to grain, in the north-eastern part of Scotland particularly, and stated his opinion, that great part of the inconvenience that had arisen with respect to that article, had originated from the operation of certain clauses in the Corn bill passed last session, which threw a variety of difficulties and obstacles in the way of the conveyance of grain from the eastern to the western parts of Scotland.

Mr. HAWKINS BROWNE, though not personally connected with that part of the country, knew enough from information of the state of the North of Scotland, with respect to fuel, to induce him heartily to concur in the motion.

Mr. DUNDAS then moved, "That there be laid before the House, an account of the duties on coal carried coast-ways in Scotland, for the last three years, distinguishing each year, and down to the latest period to which the account could be made up." Ordered.

Mr. Dundas then begged leave to say a few words on a subject of the highest importance, the trade to the East Indies.

From the notice that had been given to the India Company, of the near approach of the expiration of their charter, this was a matter which of necessity must soon come before Parliament. If no application should be made to the House by the Company, which possibly might be done, he would of himself bring forward the business.

Mr. Dundas stated that the Committee of Privy Council, for the consideration of matters relating to trade and plantations, had turned their serious attention to the subject, so far as it was connected with the manufactures, exports, and trade of this country, and three reports from the Committee of Directors of the East-India Company had been laid before the Board of Trade. Mr. Dundas then mentioned the resolutions that had been entered into on the subject, by the merchants of Liverpool and Glasgow: he said, it was a subject of vast magnitude, and that it included a variety of most important objects, which behoved to be taken in a complex view, as it would be highly dangerous to consider any one particular branch of the subject separately from the rest; in this complex view, Mr. Dundas said, it was intimately connected with the civil Government and commerce of this country, as well as involving the civil Government, revenue and trade of the British territory in India; he said, he did not know whether the abilities of the person on whom the burden of so momentous a business would probably fall, were adequate to so arduous a task, but he could assure the House that he had taken the utmost pains to collect every possible information, and had used all his endeavours to make himself complete master of the subject. He was chiefly anxious, he said, that full and accurate information on this very important business should be laid before this House and the Public, and he by no means wished that the East-India Company's own account should be taken. When such information should be brought forward, he would rather be anxious that there should be the fullest discussion upon it, and he pledged himself not to make up his mind upon any particular system, with respect to the regulation of the Government and trade of our East-India territories, till he had heard every thing that could be urged on the subject.

Mr. Dundas concluded with moving, " That there be laid  
" before this House three several Reports of the Committee of

“ Directors of the East-India Company to the Lords of the  
“ Committee of His Majesty’s Privy Council, for the regula-  
“ tion of matters relative to Trade and Plantations.”  
Ordered.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS observed, that some difference of opinion had arisen upon the propriety of calling out and embodying the militia at this time ; but there could be but one opinion of their utility as a military power for the defence of the country. They had long been regarded so, and often drawn out in the southern part of this kingdom ; and it appeared to him proper that the northern part should be under the same protection. He had nothing to bring forward at present on that subject ; he should only say now, that it did not appear to him that any good reason could be given why that part of the kingdom should be deprived of that constitutional mode of defence which had been found so beneficial in this.

A gentleman from the India House then produced at the bar the reports moved for by Mr. Secretary Dundas. They were laid on the table, and ordered to be printed.

The order of the day for receiving the report of the Committee of the whole House upon the Alien bill being read, and the report being received accordingly,

The ATTORNEY GENERAL observed, that this was a subject which had been already much attended to by this House, and, as it involved a variety of considerations, and called for many and different provisions for different objects, it consequently produced a great variety of opinions, and therefore great attention was due to the subject. On that account, himself and others had used their best endeavours to make the bill as nearly perfect as possible. But it had afterwards, from the suggestion of others, and from a farther view of the subject, been found necessary to make several alterations ; not in point of principle, but to add many regulations, in order to provide for several things which were pointed out in the course of discussion. Such, indeed, was the nature and perplexity of the case, that there still remained much to be regulated and provided for ; and therefore it was his intention to move, that the bill be re-committed. And for this he had many reasons, a few of which he begged to state to the House. In the first place, there were many who, in the course of a former discus-

sion, had expressed a wish that the bill should contain a precise definition of what was to be understood by the phrase "Alien Merchants." That consideration had of itself made many alterations already in the bill, and perhaps might require more. Another circumstance which had lately occurred, had called for the attention of those who had the framing of the bill. It was, in his opinion, of great importance, and would require some express provision. No less than four hundred aliens had arrived within these three days in this kingdom; they had all marched into the city of London. This of itself would render it necessary for the House to make many alterations in the bill now before them; this could not be done, with the least propriety, in any other stage than that of a Committee. In order, however, that the matter might be as well understood as possible, he should propose that the bill should, after it came out of the Committee, be re-printed, and a day or two allowed before the whole should be taken into consideration again. He then moved, "That this bill be re-committed to a Committee of the whole House," which was agreed to, and the House resolved itself into a Committee accordingly.

A short conversation took place on the time when the whole subject was to be debated.

Mr. FOX observed, that he was ready at any time to submit his sentiments to the House, and therefore the appointment of the time was matter of perfect indifference to him.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he wished that the report should be received on Friday; and unless some good reason could be alledged to the contrary, he should urge that the bill should be read a third time on that day, which he trusted the House would accede to, unless the discussion of the report should run into a length that would render it impossible.

The bill was ordered to be re-committed.

The House then resolved itself into a Committee, and went through the bill, clause by clause. Several amendments were proposed and agreed to.

The ATTORNEY GENERAL mentioned that he understood that no less than four hundred emigrants had arrived from France yesterday; that they were armed; and had it not been for the vigilance of the Custom-house Officers, might

have come into the country armed, and had it in their power to do much mischief.

Mr. BURKE said, his information led him to think, that those men, however suspicious their appearance might be, had no hostile intention towards this country.

Different Members having made observations on the clauses, the House was resumed, the report received, and ordered to be taken into consideration on Friday.

The House adjourned.

*Friday, 4th January.*

Mr. CHANCELLOR PITT gave notice, that in the Committee of Ways and Means, on Monday, he would state the amount of the surplus of the Consolidated Fund, in order that an application of it might be made to the Committee. He also suggested, that as business would probably be concluded by Tuesday next, an adjournment would take place for a fortnight from that day.

Mr. M. A. TAYLOR wished to know whether any objection would be made by the Minister to a motion for addressing His Majesty to order an account of the different barracks erecting in the kingdom, with the number of men intended to be lodged in each, to be laid before the House.

Mr. CHANCELLOR PITT wished the question relative to the barracks to be fairly discussed, and in a full House. With regard to any information that might be necessary to the discussion, it certainly was not his wish to refuse it.

Mr. TAYLOR declared, that it was not his intention to bring the subject before the House till after the holidays.

Mr. SHERIDAN gave notice, that immediately after the recess, he would make a motion relative to the reform of the Royal Burghs in Scotland. As the subject was of a most serious nature, he wished Mr. Dundas to give as much attention to it as possible during the holidays.

Mr. CHANCELLOR PITT wished to know how soon after the recess the motion would be made.

Mr. SHERIDAN replied, within a week certainly.

Mr. CHANCELLOR PITT speaking of the recess, stated, that its duration was proposed at present to be only for a fortnight; for during the continuation of it the executive

government might be forced to adopt measures on which it would be necessary to consult the House. If, however, no necessity for adopting such measures should exist, then the recess would very probably be for a longer period. But at all events it would not last longer than to the end of the present month.

The order of the day for taking into consideration the report of the Committee on the Alien bill, was then moved and read.

Mr. M. A. TAYLOR begged the indulgence of the House for a very short space of time, while he submitted to them the reasons upon which he felt himself under the necessity of opposing the present bill. He would not have troubled the House upon the present occasion, but that he, and those with whom he had the honour to act, had been called upon to state the ground upon which they proceeded; and he was the more anxious so to do, as it had been mentioned in a former night by an honourable friend of his, that this was a measure which all must approve; whereas he totally disapproved of it in its principle, and in the different regulations which it proposed to enact.

It was not his intention, he said, so far to digress from the subject, and follow the example of a right honourable gentleman, (Mr. Burke) as to enter into a detail of French politics, to enumerate and comment upon those horrid acts which had been committed in various parts of France, which every good man must lament, and which not even the worst could justify, nor to read French newspapers, which every body had read before, nor to exhibit daggers or other instruments of war, but to keep strictly to the measure before the House. Whatever degree of alarm might be supposed to exist in this country, both with respect to its internal situation, and to external danger from abroad, and alarms which had been excited and encouraged with considerable assiduity, or however gentlemen's imaginations might have warmed by the eloquent and vehement harangues they heard, he trusted that the House would consider that bill calmly, and with as little prejudice as possible.

In defending this bill, gentlemen had spoken of the situation of affairs, and the urgent necessity of some measure of this kind; not acknowledging that necessity, of course he

could not admit of the propriety of introducing this bill. If he thought with a noble friend of his, (Lord Titchfield) that by any measure of this sort the Constitution was to be supported, or the country to be saved, he trusted he should be found among its first supporters; but he could not see how the Constitution was to be supported by a bill violating its first principles, or how the country could be saved by giving implicit confidence to Ministers, whose blind and improvident conduct, added to their total ignorance of Continental affairs, had brought this country into its present situation with France. he regretted the defalcation of several gentlemen on his side of the House at the present moment, and particularly of his right honourable friend, (Mr. Windham) whom he did not see in his place, and whose integrity and abilities were so well known and universally acknowledged; but though that right honourable gentleman, misled by the influence of fears which appeared to him totally groundless, had, for the present, misplaced his confidence, he was hopeful such difference of opinion could not be of long continuance.

The principle of the present bill, Mr. Taylor said, appeared to him of the most dangerous tendency; and, if once established, he did not well see where it was to stop, or why it might not be extended to British subjects as well as foreigners, and lead to a total repeal of the Habeas Corpus act, upon grounds of danger totally ideal, or at least unsupported by any evidence.

To form a proper idea upon this subject, it would be necessary to take a retrospective view of the various propositions which had been advanced, and the stile of language which had been held since the commencement of the present session of Parliament. His Majesty's Ministers had felt it necessary, in order to justify themselves for adopting so extraordinary and alarming a measure as that of calling Parliament together so unexpectedly, to state to that House, not only that there existed a numerous and formidable body of men in this country, who professed principles inimical to the Government and Constitution of this country; but that there had actually happened in various parts of the kingdom riots and insurrections of a very alarming nature. That there had existed riots and insurrections of a very alarming nature, he was very ready to ad-

mit. But of what description were they? They were composed of men who, while they were acting in the most violent and outrageous manner, had the words "Church and King" constantly in their mouths; and he was sorry to observe, that his right honourable friend, (Mr. Windham) in speaking of them, had not used language sufficiently expressive of his disapprobation. It was true, he had not attempted to excuse them, for that was impossible; but he had in a manner passed the subject over, saying, that some allowances must be made for the feelings of men. He knew of no allowance that should be made for men conducting themselves in such a manner; they were equally the subject of censure and prosecution, whether the object they pretended to have in view was the support of the Church and King, or whether it was to overturn the Government. But these were not the kind of riots to which Ministers had alluded; they had spoken of insurrections, fomented by disaffected persons at home, for the purpose of entirely subverting the Constitution of this country. Ministers had been repeatedly called upon to state to the House where and when those riots had existed; they had been called upon to lay some proofs of them before the House, but in vain. The right honourable Secretary had certainly, in kindness to the House, mentioned four or five instances, every one of which had been entirely disproved. It had been said, as an argument against the necessity of proving these facts, that they were so notorious, that every person who had eyes must see these insurrections, and every one who had ears must hear the seditious conversation which every where took place. Though he did not pretend to be equal in point of abilities or judgement to those who made that assertion, yet he might venture to assert, that his eyes were as clear, and his ears as good as theirs; still he had never been able to discover, in any part of the country in which he had been, that dangerous disposition among the people; but every attempt to obtain any thing like a proof failed, and the House voted their belief of the existence of the danger upon the assertion of Ministers. Then came the present bill, brought in with as little argument, and supported by as few facts as he would venture to assert any measure of the kind ever was,



It appeared to him, that it violated, in its principle, the most sacred rights of our Constitution, without any sufficient cause, or indeed any cause at all, to justify such violation ; it violates the rights of aliens, for aliens have rights acknowledged and secured to them by the laws of this country ; they have civil rights, and they have rights in criminal cases, as the having half of their jury composed of aliens, &c. The present bill leaves them entirely in the power of the King, and that power may go even as far as death ; which would be the certain consequence to an emigrant from France, if sent back to his own country. He said, he never would agree to leave any man at the mercy of Ministers, without evidence of guilt, though he did not mean to doubt their humanity.

If facts were stated to satisfy him of the necessity, he would support the present measures of Government ; but it had been said that it would be improper to make any such disclosure, as it would tend to frustrate the object in view ; he could by no means see the consequence, for if, by charging any particular persons they should leave this kingdom, we should then be equally freed from them as by the operation of the present bill.

But, amidst all this violent and dreadful alarm, has any man been taken up, have any prosecutions been brought ; no such thing, all is bare assertion. But even this hazard, if any such could be supposed, might be avoided by the appointment of a Select Committee, consisting perhaps of ten members, five from each side of the House, and let it be as secret a Committee as possible. If such a Committee were appointed, and they should report that, in their opinion, there existed in fact such a danger as is now held out to us, he said he would certainly give his utmost support to the executive Government : but at present his information led him to believe no such thing. Gentlemen have said, the Constitution must be preserved, and the country saved ; this, he was sure, would never be done by the present Ministers, who, in the uniform system of their measures, had trampled on the most valuable principles of that Constitution for which they now pretend so great an affection. Mr. Taylor said, that he trusted for having thus delivered his sentiments against the bill, he should not incur the censure of being a republican or a leveller ; he was neither, and every

man must allow it; yet one would imagine, from the language he had heard, that neither himself nor those with whom he had the honour to act, had any thing at stake in the country. It was true, he said, that they did not enjoy places or pensions either in their own persons or that of their families; that they were not blessed with the smile of the Crown; but he ever would contend, that every man in the kingdom, from the peasant to the peer, whether his fortune amounted to one shilling or one thousand a year, had a deep stake in the interest of his country; he had a deep stake in its prosperity, its happiness, and its freedom.

Of late, the great body of the people had been held in contempt, and of no account whatever; but the law and constitution of this country, and the Bill of Rights, recognise the rights of the people; our Constitution must be preserved entire; and there is no less evil to be dreaded by derogating from the rights of the people, than from those of the aristocracy, or of the Crown. He said, that his honourable friends who had differed in opinion from him, had, no doubt, been actuated by the impression which the fear of supposed danger to the Constitution had made upon their minds; at the same time he could not help thinking it hard that they should have added to the insinuations against his right honourable friend, (Mr. Fox) insinuations as false as they are wicked, and as groundless as malicious; this they undoubtedly had done, though much contrary to their own intentions. He hoped, however, that the friends with whom he had the honour to think and act, would steadily pursue that line of conduct which had hitherto distinguished them, founded in a zealous attachment to the true principles of the Constitution; he knew they were not to be terrified; and he trusted that if deprived, for the present, of some of those friends who had been accustomed to agree with them in political sentiments, those who remained would be the more firm and determined; the words of his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox) were of sterling weight, and he was convinced would be found in the end to be of sound policy. He deprecated the idea of a foreign war, unless totally unavoidable; and with respect to the bill under consideration, he said, it appeared to him, that it would be much wiser and better to exercise the King's prerogative, which he was of opinion the

law invested him with, in sending aliens out of the kingdom, should circumstances render such exercise of it necessary, than to have recourse to the regulations of the present bill. Should this bill be passed, it appeared to him that it would put an end to the King's prerogative in that respect. For his part he thought that neither the exercise of the prerogative, nor the regulations of the bill, were necessary, and he would therefore oppose the bill.

Earl WYCOMBE conceived the bill under consideration to be a measure liable to a variety of objections. His Lordship forbore, he said, to enter on the particular clauses of the bill, because he should chiefly direct his arguments against the principle of it. He had ever conceived it to be of the essence of justice to have no respect of persons; but in this instance no facts were brought forward to justify the very severe restrictions and penalties proposed by this Bill to be imposed on Aliens. The noble Lord said it was not a measure without precedent in former periods of the history of this country; but experience had proved that the measures then adopted of a nature similar to the present were equally impolitic and illiberal. He owned he would rather wish that all the benefits of our Constitution should be extended to foreigners resident here. Let them have a fair trial, and if proved to be guilty, he would wish as much as any man to see them punished. He disapproved of the principle of the present bill as unjust, leading to the most dangerous consequences as a precedent, and justified by no apparent necessity. He lamented the difference of opinion that had taken place among some of his honourable friends, and he was not sure whether the opinion which he was now to avow, would be strictly conformable to any that had yet been given. As to the internal state of the kingdom, he did not say that he apprehended no danger, but he was decidedly of opinion, that there existed no ground for any alarm from disaffection to the Constitution; but he was not equally free from alarm at the conduct of Ministers in pursuing measures, as they have all along done, ruinous to the country, and putting, unnecessarily, a power into the hands of the executive government, which might be used for the most dangerous purposes. In this opinion he knew he was not singular; perhaps he might not be more so in the opinion

he was about to deliver as to our external danger ; indeed he was yet to learn that there existed any ; we were not menaced, nor were we likely to be attacked. He would not, he said, enter into a detail of the internal situation of France, nor trouble the House with French newspapers, or French decrees, but it appeared to him in every view, that to engage this country in a war at present, would be a most ruinous and impolitic measure. Our adversaries have unquestionably much less to lose than we have ; what could we gain by possessing ourselves of any of their West-India islands ? On the contrary, he rather thought it would be advantageous to this country, if our own West-India islands were independent of it. Experience had, in repeated instances, shewn of how little advantage colonies were to a mother country. Every day made him more clearly of opinion, that there was not any necessity for our going to war. An explanation had been given of the decree of the 19th of November : and shall we, said the noble Lord, embark in a war in defence of aliens, who are not ready to go to war themselves ? Holland seemed by no means disposed to go to war. His Lordship then adverted to the conduct of the Dutch towards Great Britain in the year 1780, and gave a variety of instances of their having given to our enemies every assistance in their power, while they peremptorily refused to us the stipulated assistance which they were engaged to afford us. He concluded with saying, that till he heard some better argument brought forward in support of the conduct of Ministry, than well-turned phrases and specious declamation, he would give his most determined opposition to measures which appeared to him in the highest degree detrimental to the public interest as well as to individuals.

Lord FIELDING observed, that having taken an opportunity the very first day of the session, to give notice of his intention to move for leave to bring in a bill for suspending the Habeas Corpus act, as far as might relate to the persons of foreigners, no one could suppose that he was not a friend to the object which the framers of the present bill had in view ; and yet it so happened, that the bill itself did not very much please him ; it had been drawn up in a great hurry ; several new clauses, framed without previous deliberation, were added to it in the Committee ; and one in particular respecting alien mor-

chants, which he greatly feared would completely defeat the whole object of the bill, as under the exception which was enacted in favour of persons of such a description, the very men against whom the bill was intended to operate, might be able to escape. It was well known, that there were persons, who were possessed of much ingenuity in devising means for evading the force of laws; and in this case, their ingenuity would have a fine field to work in, as two very able gentlemen (Mr. Sheridan and the Attorney General) had on a former day, contrived to speak very often to each other on the meaning of the term " Alien merchant" without having been able for a long time to make each other understand the sense in which they respectively used those two words. Indeed it was so obvious that the whole bill required much farther consideration, that when so unconnected and insignificant a Member as himself proposed that it should be recommitted, his proposition was immediately adopted by the learned gentlemen. An honourable Member said much about the rights of aliens: no man was more ready to respect them than he was; but his first object was to secure the safety of the state: and that being once out of danger, he would be happy to see aliens in the fullest possession and enjoyment of every right which the law and constitution of England allowed them. Gentlemen had called for evidence of the facts on which the bill was said to be grounded; but he for one would not press for the production of such evidence pending either a negotiation or preparations for war. He had been captivated with the eloquence and ability of a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) who on a former day had commented upon a French state paper, and thundered against the impiety and blasphemy of atheism; but he wished he had confined himself to that point, and not represented the two countries as not merely preparing for, but as actually at war. He was strongly disposed to hope that war might be avoided; but should it at last become inevitable, he trusted, that the nation would engage in it with heart and soul; and that every Englishman would be ready to sacrifice both life and fortune in the defence of his country and its constitution.

Lord BEAUCHAMP said, that the bill under consideration was a necessary link in the chain of public measures which

had been found requisite in the present crisis, and was looked up to with the most anxious expectation by the Public, who were much alarmed by the great influx of foreigners; an evil which, from the measures that were pursued, and the events that had taken place on the continent, was daily increasing, so that this country would soon remain the only asylum for those who were obliged to flee for their crimes, or who might come here from worse motives. As to the regulations of the present bill with respect to passports, the noble Lord said, they were only such as already prevail all over the continent, are found of much use in point of police, and proved by experience to be attended with no degree of inconvenience to travellers; he was so much persuaded of this, that he believed he would not have hesitated in agreeing to make that part of the bill a permanent regulation, instead of a temporary one. He then adverted to the clause in the bill for limiting the residence of aliens, or sending them out of the kingdom, and stated his opinion that, if such a power is to be delegated to the Crown, it must be done effectually. He thought great exaggeration had been made use of in speaking of the penalty of transportation for life, proposed to be inflicted on aliens in certain cases; in fact, it was only a means of securing obedience to the orders that may be made for aliens to leave the country, &c. and was a penalty which could not be incurred by any alien, unless by the greatest possible folly. For his part, he said, he was satisfied that the propriety of this new and extraordinary measure was fully justified from the present danger. Some gentlemen had expressed their exultation in the affairs of France; but whatever was his opinion, he did not think it necessary to go into any detail on that subject. As to the reasons which might lead to the propriety of avoiding a disclosure of any particular facts of which His Majesty's Ministers might be in possession, two very forcible ones occurred to him; first, that in case any individuals should afterwards be brought to trial, it would be an improper prejudication of their case; and, secondly, on the supposition that the present disaffections should be fomented by the Executive Council of France, it would surely be a very delicate matter at the present juncture, though it might afford subject for a manifesto, should war be once determined on. Legislators

must act on probabilities, without requiring proof; and he was not without suspicions that both foreign money and emissaries had been employed. He then took notice of the letter from the Convention of France to the states of America, in which they say, we will establish liberty all over the world, or perish in the attempt. What, said his Lordship, is the liberty here meant? Not surely true liberty; but a principle which leads to the subversion of all order, and to destroy that which they could not themselves hope to attain. May not Great Britain, among other nations, become the object of this resolution of the French Convention, which they have already been practising in other nations; though she may probably be the last reserved for the lion's gripe? This, he said, he believed would be the case, as France knew too well the resources of this country, and the attachment of the people to the constitution, to attempt attacking us, till they had possessed themselves of the rest of Europe: but because our danger may be at a distance, are we therefore to overlook it?

The noble Lord said he thought the moderation of the British Councils had done honour to the country; he approved entirely of the present bill, and thought the grounds nugatory on which it was attacked; at present he thought a suspension of the Habeas Corpus act not necessary, and that the provisions of the present bill would answer the purpose better. He could not conceive that it could be considered as any violation of the commercial treaty with France, nor did he see any thing in the objection as to its being a breach of hospitality; to those who were the proper objects of such hospitality, the banished clergy and nobility, it had been, and would continue to be, afforded in a way highly honourable to this country. He adverted to the proclamation of May, and said, that the measure had met his most hearty approbation, and he should act inconsistently, were he to withhold his concurrence to measures which were only following up the principle of that proclamation. He said he regretted much that there should exist any difference of opinion in the House upon the present occasion, and he could not help disapproving of the amendment which had been proposed by his right honourable friend, (Mr. Fox) on the opening of the session, and of his motion for a negotiation with France, because he had no doubt, that had that House been much divided,

or shewn any backwardness in approving the measures of Government, it would have led the Public to apprehend that the Constitution either could not, or ought not, to be supported. The noble Lord said it was a crisis of great delicacy, and whatever might be his opinion of those who compose the present Administration, he conceived that public duty called upon him, at this moment, to give them a fair, reasonable, and honourable support; and he begged to be understood that he pledged himself to no more than to do so in this instance.

Major MAITLAND rose, and stated, that he thought it his duty to oppose the bill, both because the reasons which had been assigned for its introduction were known not to have been founded on fact, and because it went to give powers to Government, which, considering the prejudice that was at present generally entertained against aliens, ought not to be delegated. If he could be induced to believe that the danger of the country, which was so much talked of, really existed, he, for one, should have no objection to giving his support to the executive Government; but he saw no danger, except that which had been created by Ministers themselves, and which they wished to be generally propagated and believed, in order that, taking advantage of the ferment of the people, they might carry measures which they would not dare to bring forward at any other period. He then alluded to the doctrine which had fallen from an honourable friend of his, in the course of a former debate, a doctrine which appeared to him most extraordinary and paradoxical! His honourable friend had accused Ministers of having come into power in an unconstitutional manner, and of having pursued a line of conduct, from the commencement of their administration to this time, which had been the very cause of the present alarm and danger; yet now that they had proceeded to such a climax of profligacy, he would finally give his vote in support of their measures. He, for his part, did not believe in any such danger; but when that rumour was at an end, he should attack its authors, and endeavour to bring them to punishment. It was his wish, before he came to speak more particularly on the subject, to notice what had fallen from a right honourable gentleman, (Mr. Burke) but he found it would be impossible to follow him minutely through the detail of what he had said relative to the affairs of France.



That right honourable gentleman had appealed uniformly to the passions, rather than the judgement; and in the course of his appeal, had indulged himself in futile and contradictory assertions. He had stated the liability to change, in the National Convention, respecting all their measures: and yet he had produced a decree of the National Convention, which was liable to be altered, as a ground for entering into a war with France. Major Maitland declared that he could not conceive the utility, or the object of such a war. If such a war were entered into for the purpose of preventing the circulation of French principles, it would have an effect directly opposite. The troops who might be sent to France, would imbibe those principles in the most pernicious degree, and bring them back again into this country. Such had been the case with the French troops, who had been sent to America, and thus proved the cause of producing the recent revolution. With regard to the present bill, it went to vest His Majesty's Ministers with powers which he should always oppose; but a view of their uniform conduct, and an ill opinion of their intentions, formed in his mind an irresistible objection. When the late proclamations came out, he believed the nation at large were astonished; but it was hoped that, at the meeting of Parliament, Government would give a satisfactory explanation of their conduct. That House had heard of no such explanation, nor had any proofs been given of the existence of the danger. With regard to the business of Parliament, of the five insurrections which had been stated to have taken place, only one had any connection with the French revolution, and that occurred before the last prorogation, so that it could not be urged as a plea for calling Parliament together before the term of that prorogation had expired. The right honourable Secretary of State had, on the first day of the session, thought proper to represent Scotland as being disaffected; but it now appeared, that such representation was only meant as an excuse for having summoned Parliament to meet at fourteen days notice, and called out the militia: for the right honourable Secretary had a few days ago proposed to give Scotland a militia, which, consistently with his original assertion, would be putting arms into the hands of the very people from whom he entertained the greatest apprehensions. Such were the shifts to which men

were driven to answer political purposes; and hence, the misrepresentations which he had heard, of an honest and loyal people! Major Maitland then asserted, that whatever alarm Ministers might have affected respecting aliens, they were themselves assiduously creating ground for that alarm, by the importation of aliens, duty free, into this country. [Here a cry of prove! prove! proceeded from the other side of the House]. He said, that he could not relate any fact precisely from his own knowledge, but he had heard, from a quarter which he had reason to believe, that a number of foreigners had lately arrived in the Harwich packets, by means of passports from the British Ambassador at the Hague, who had assured them of admission into this country free of any duty at the custom-house. Whether the fact was true, was best known to Ministers, who had created so much alarm on the subject. Of this alarm, what, Major Maitland asked, had been the consequence? Not that the prisons were crowded with foreigners, but that a reward of 100*l.* had been offered for apprehending an individual, Mr. Frost, who had been educated in the school of the present Minister, and who, it was understood, was shortly coming over to take his trial. As a reason for this extreme measure, a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) had said, that there were nineteen assassins in this country, who might murder His Majesty and all his family. Such a statement tended to infuse the greatest alarms into the minds of men without doors; alarms, which no person could have suggested, except one whose imagination teemed with the most horrid ideas of massacres and murders. He thought it proper, however, to repeat, that, though he opposed the bill, for the reasons which he had already stated; yet, should a war commence, he would do his duty as became a subject, whether in the senate, or in the field, and prove that those who opposed the present measure, did not deserve to be charged with disaffection to Government, and were as ready to sacrifice their lives and fortunes for the good of their country, as those who were most noisy in professing their attachment to the constitution.

Mr. HARDINGE said, he addressed himself to the House, not as presuming to hope that he could add a single word of any importance, to what the noble Lord (Beauchamp) had

impressed upon those who heard him, with all the weight of his abilities and character ; nor as presuming to hope that he could answer the animated speech of the honourable Member (Major Maitland) who had resolved his opposition to the measure, into a dislike of the Minister ; nor as presuming to hope that he could answer a noble Earl (Lord Wycombe) who had intimated the opinion, that because Holland, as the noble Earl thought, had misconducted herself to us, she should break our treaty with her ; nor as meaning to debate the expediency of peace and war—a topic not only irrelevant, but mischievous. He had risen, impelled by the subject immediately, and singly at issue, to give, in the most unequivocal and clear manner, his own sentiments upon the necessity for such a bill, and upon the bill itself. He had once hoped, he said, that instead of the animated opposition which this bill had already encountered, and the able opposition it was likely to encounter, he should attest, in support of it here, not a bare unanimity, but the most cordial, that Parliament had ever known. It was, in his view of it, a measure prompted by a just impression of an alarm and peril, universally felt, and prompted as a defence, not only of the executive Government, for the day, but of those great principles which every ingenuous mind, whether upon this, or upon that side of the House, was in the habit of cherishing the most ; the defence of liberty and religion, (to say nothing of property and life, in comparison) against incendiaries abroad, conspiring with incendiaries at home, to destroy, in one flame, every order of Government, ecclesiastical or civil, in our constitution. He had once hoped that opposition would come forward, as one man, at such an awful crisis of national danger, friends and auxiliaries to the executive Government, without prejudice to their dislike of the Minister's conduct, or of the mode in which he was appointed, and without prejudice to their general hope of continuing together, a phalanx against him ; a phalanx, by the way, a little more compact than it has been, which may be an advantage to it. He had hoped they would say, as a party, what some of them had said as individuals, when they seceded from the rest ; “ We dislike the Minister, we like ourselves better, (a very natural preference !) but we support the Minister to defend the country.” Such, to his immortal honour, were the emphatical words of

a noble Marquis (Lord Titchfield). He had hoped, that such of the party, at least, as had signed papers, confessing the existence and prevalency of opinions dangerous to the Government, would confess it in Parliament; that such of them as were Friends of the People would be anxious to exculpate the popular character in this kingdom, from the original sin of those levelling opinions, assigning it, as they could, with more truth, to artifice and money, imported from the Continent;—that confessing the danger and the origin of it in conformity with such notorious facts, they would either support this bill, or suggest a wiser and a better. In all these hopes, he had been cruelly disappointed; and he was timid enough to lament, as a disadvantage to the public interest, a right honourable gentleman's (Mr. Fox) persevering opposition to such a measure. That as to the bill itself, he had the honour to coincide in opinion with an admired and great man, who had given such unexampled proofs of ability, eloquence, and public spirit, upon these topics. He agreed, that if the bill had a fault, it was the fault of inadequacy, not excess, in the powers given to the executive Government; that he had in the Committee entered his protest against the exception of alien merchants, from the power to send mischievous aliens out of the kingdom, and had been fortunate enough to see that exception removed. If Quarentine was thought expedient upon the apprehension of plague, before the suspected vessel could land her goods. If by the law of nations we can send even a ship in distress by cannon from the shore, when plague infects her cargo, how infinitely more expedient is the safeguard of this bill against the most infernal pestilence that ever scourged a nation—the creed and profession of anarchy, which every day poured in upon us from the continent? Was he to be challenged here, as in a Court of Justice, with two important little words, in that scene of action, but ridiculous here? To the words “prove it,” he would answer, first that it was not a juridical but prudential inquiry; next, that it would, or might, be dangerous, to go into the detail, perhaps impracticable, from the nature of the subject, but most of all he would answer, that it was a bold and rash contumely upon the sense of the whole kingdom, to call in question the fact of that party in disaffection, which a people so enlightened had believed, and had resisted with such

patriotism and public spirit. He would therefore say, upon these grounds, I will not prove it. He then stated, in a few words, the power given by the bill, and said, he would follow it up in argument against those who could alone be the objects of it, in order to see what power it gave to oppress the innocent. If the bill should operate with restraint and punishment upon the emissaries of Atheism and sedition, it would fall where it should. If it should punish, or discover and exclude, the leveller in principle, who was an incendiary at heart, it would fall where it should; whether it found him with or without a dagger in his hand, with or without French money or French paper in his pocket, as it would find him at least with French principles in his head—principles of rebellion against all Government, and an avowed and boasted contempt for every oath of allegiance in the world. If the name of an emigrant should be the mask of an emissary and a leveller, this act would pull it off, and would catch the emissary or the leveller again. If it should be the case of an emigrant here, from the emigrants abroad, (from the emigrant army, for example) he considered such an alien as the just object of suspicion, because if he should negotiate his reinstatement in France, his interest may tempt him to make proselytes here as a merit and plea to urge at Paris. If it should be the case of an emigrant and refugee from the desolations and cruelties of Paris, that emigrant was our friend. He had come to us for shelter and mercy; he had come to us, appealing to our Government by law, against a Government by the sword; he had merited our sympathy, and we had given him unequivocal proofs of it. Without compliment to the Minister, could it be imagined that he would be so mad as to go out of his way in shaking, by the oppression of such an alien, that center of union which incorporated the public interest and the public opinion to his own? The only other class that remained was the indifferent alien, the byestander, who took no part in the conflict, but was blameless, and, as an alien, was entitled by that character alone to our hospitable reception. That a Minister could oppress him, that he could oppress an alien merchant for the sake of oppressing him, and with no other possible temptation of interest, he confessed, and, thinking all discretionary powers dangerous, he lamented it, it was a necessary evil; because,

without an indefinite power over aliens of all descriptions, the mischievous could never be separated from the good. He said the report of M. le Brun, read the other night, would, of itself, in his opinion, justify this bill. That Minister had stated in the National Assembly, that Paris employed political agents here, (not of course accredited by us); and he adds a direct menace to appeal from what he affects to call "the Palace," and "the Minister," (but knowing it well to be the sense of Parliament) *ad populum*, or to the nation, by which he means the lowest classes of the mob. This report was the signal of rebellion to the disaffected here, and the bill would act with a salutary effect in averting that mischief. That if he should be told it would affront the National Convention, he would answer, not as a reason for a war, but as a reason for this bill, that France had, by fomenting seditious and levelling principles here, thrown upon us the necessity of spirit in self-defence, or of cowardice in self-abasement, *ante tubam*, and before our exertions had been tried. The libels of the day would of themselves justify this bill. They were French to the bone in connection as well as principle. They had given birth to doctrines upon the subject of public libel, which he made no scruple to condemn as at once ignorant and mischievous; nor could sedition of the worst kind receive a more powerful help. It had been asserted, for example, that intention proved the libel, instead of libel proving the intention, and that all opinions upon Government were "free," that is, free, in the sense of legal impunity, after publication, as well as before it, "let the seditious tendency of such opinions be ever so apparent." The most eminent republican of his day, who wrote when England was a Commonwealth, and who wrote, in the defence of unlicensed printing, a most able and sound as well as eloquent composition, had very different ideas of a seditious libel. He meant our immortal poet, Milton, from whose poetical prose, in a part of that work, a fanciful and brilliant passage had been quoted the first night of the session, for a purpose foreign to the subject then debated. He would quote him, *de tribus capellis*, and he wished the earnest attention of the House:—"In every Church and Commonwealth (he was not enlightened enough to disclaim the alliance of Church and State) it is of the greatest concern-

“ment to magistrates to look vigilantly how books demean  
“themselves as well as men—to imprison them—to execute  
“sharp justice upon them as malefactors ; for books are not  
“absolutely dead things, but they have a potency of life in  
“them, to be as active as that soul was whose progeny they  
“are ; nay, they contain, as in a vial, the purest extract and  
“efficacy of that intellect which bred them. They are as  
“lively and as vigorously productive as the fabulous Dragon’s  
“teeth, and, sown up and down, may spring up armed men.”

It was against those arms and those men that he thanked the bill for providing him with a defence. He had asserted in the Committee his individual opinion, which he took leave to assert again, “that His Majesty had, by law, the right of sending  
“aliens out of the kingdom for the public safety.” But he commended the bill for not asserting that right on the one hand, or disclaiming it on the other. If the King had not the right, this bill was necessary to confer it upon him for a time, and for the purpose delineated in the act itself. If he had the right, still it was a discretion which the Legislature could, with more advantage to the Public, direct and apply—that in consulting Parliament upon the necessity which made the habitual exercise of this right expedient, with a reference to objects of national importance, the Minister had acted with consummate wisdom as well as delicacy, if he thought the right strictly vested in the King. Upon these grounds he declared himself a firm and zealous friend of the bill.

Lord WYCOMBE got up to explain. He denied that he had laid it down as a position that we ought to break faith with Holland because she had broke faith with us. What he said was, that the Dutch were indifferent about the Scheldt, and that we ought not to be so very forward to give succours unasked to those who had so often refused to give us the succours with which they were bound by treaty to furnish us. But he would go one step farther, and say, that should the people of Holland be so disposed towards the French as that the latter should be able to overrun the United Provinces with as much facility as they had overrun the Austrian Netherlands, we ought totally to disregard our treaty with the Republic, and that in so doing we should be warranted by reason and common sense.

Mr. JENKINSON observed, that the declaration of the French Minister explained at once all the objections which could be made to this bill on the ground that no hostility had been offered on the part of France to the Government of this country. The declaration of the French Minister made lately in the National Convention, expressed hostility to all monarchy, and specifically to this country, when the Nation and the Sovereign were treated distinctly. This was not the only reason why such a bill as the present was a necessary measure; for it was well known that libels of the most dangerous tendency, directly hostile to our Constitution, and, by the influence of French emissaries, were industriously circulated in this country: these were so evident in their tendency, that it was impossible to mistake them. To these emissaries were to be added a certain Society, who called themselves a Society for Constitutional Information. He should avoid entering into a minute detail of the proceedings of this Society: he should content himself with adverting to a few particulars. They professed, by a public advertisement, to hold open correspondence with certain societies in France, and they had recommended to their corresponding societies in England the perusal of Mr. Paine's book. It was not his intention to say any thing harsh of that book: he should only say of it what the book said for itself. It was not a book written with a view to reform any abuses that, in the opinion of some, required to be reformed, but it was a book written avowedly to overturn the Constitution altogether. Those therefore who circulated such a book could not have any wish for a reformation, but must aim at an overthrow of our Constitution; for this Society must be allowed to have adopted the principles in that book, by endeavouring to circulate it. This appeared to him to be highly mischievous; for by the circulation of such books the lower classes of society were made discontented with Government, and might consequently become bad subjects. Such books in general, from their nature, must make a considerable impression upon the minds of the lower orders of society, by teaching them to look for a better condition when the present system should be overturned; by their education their minds were not capable of perceiving the delusive nature of these visionary theories; and by their habits they were not much used to reflection, and



therefore were easily led to expect a better situation in life, without once thinking it was possible they might incur a greater evil. They resembled a silly adventurer in a lottery, who stakes his last guinea in hopes of sharing of the capital prize ; and, above all, these were persons who, from not having property or stake in the country, were, or would be, eager in adventure, and had nothing to check their rage of experiment and innovation. Men, habituated to thinking and reflecting, would of course detect the fallacy, the assumed reasoning in this book ; but to persons of the description he had mentioned it was highly dangerous. This, then, was of itself a reason for the passing of the present bill, because it was a measure that would tend to diminish the influence of French emissaries and the influence of French Councils. Another reason appeared to him for this measure. It was well known what was the nature of the directions given by the National Convention of France to all their Generals, and what was the conduct of these Generals acting under these directions, particularly the conduct of General Dumourier, the whole of which was a system to propagate principles and doctrines by the sword ; and when the French had succeeded in every other place, they would proceed to the conversion of the people of England in the same way. When he considered all these things, he did say he was warranted in declaring that any step that tended to the diminution of the French influence in this country was prudent ; and he considered himself as having shewn the danger of that influence, so as to make the measure applicable. He alledged also, that it was the intention of the French to kindle the flame of civil war in this country, and that they had got a great way towards making the lower order of society discontented, and that the meeting of Parliament had been necessary in order to extinguish that spirit of disaffection. He believed that the calling out of the militia, too, tended to extinguish that spirit ; he believed the debates in that House, and the general concurrence of opinion expressed in it, tended also to extinguish that spirit. He believed likewise, that the bill now before the House would tend to extinguish that spirit by driving the persons most active in sowing the seeds of sedition out of this country. He then took notice of the power which the present bill would give to the Ministry, and maintained it

would be only such as would be wanted ; and adopted the sentiment of Sir Gilbert Elliot, expressed on a former day, who said that the granting of power by the deliberative to the executive power of the state, in cases of extraordinary emergency, was a proof of freedom ; and added, that he saw no reason for supposing that Ministers would make any improper use of their power, for they would not have the least temptation to do so ; and even if they should, they would be responsible to that House, as in all cases of power abused. He distinguished between the culpable and the innocent emigrants, who were at present in this country ; the one would remain under the protection of Government, and the others would be removed ; this would dispel the alarm among the people, for they would know that Government either had removed them, or, having the power, would remove them, as the safety of the country required. And as to the innocent emigrants, he had reason to know that many of them were men of exalted characters and sentiments ; they had given proof of it by their conduct ; they had borne their difficulties and adversity with unparalleled fortitude ; and if the hour should arrive, which he anxiously hoped and wished it would, when those great men should be restored to their rank and possessions in their country, he had no doubt but their moderation in prosperity would equal their fortitude in distress.

As to the provision of the present bill, he was of opinion that there was no more force given to Government than was necessary for the safety of the State. It had indeed been said, that this was equal to a suspension of the Habeas-Corpus act ; indeed he saw nothing very extraordinary in that observation, taken in its full extent as an objection ; for when the state of the country required it, that act of Parliament had been suspended. It had been so six or seven times in modern periods of our history ; even almost immediately after our revolution, it was suspended by the very men who brought about that revolution, and they were highly applauded for the measure ; but the matter of doubt which he had upon this subject was, whether or not it infringed upon the prerogative of the Crown, for he had heard advanced in that House, and he had read in the works of a great lawyer (Mr. Justice Blackstone) that the King had an undoubted right to order any alien to depart this realm

of his own will and pleasure—this was one of the prerogatives of the King of Great Britain, and therefore the only doubt which could be entertained with respect to this bill was, whether it would not, or might not, hereafter be quoted as a precedent, that the King had not that power, or this bill would not have been necessary; however that might be, he did not believe that, in general, the gentlemen who were the most adverse to this bill would not be the more disposed to object to it on that account.

He had heard it mentioned, that the situation in which this country was at this time, and which this bill was intended to remedy, was brought upon this country by the present Ministry. By way of answer to this, he begged to ask in his turn of these gentlemen, whether they really believed, that if what they complained of in the year 1784, about the Minister's coming into power unconstitutionally, had not happened, the affairs of France might not have been exactly in the same situation as they were in at present. He believed they would; why then it was the French revolution, and not the unconstitutional conduct of Ministers, which had brought on this country the calamities which now hung over us: and therefore he could not see how that could have any thing to do with the question now before the House. He then took notice of the progress of French principles, and urged the propriety of our doing all we could to stop them in this country; for the French, unless they met with some timely check, would spread their pernicious principles over the whole globe. He considered the present bill as a step to check them, and therefore it should have his concurrence; for whether there was danger within or without, this measure appeared to him to be necessary. He considered himself to have proved that there were both, and that Parliament must allow Ministers to act with some discretion upon this occasion. Upon these grounds, he gave his approbation to the present bill.

Mr. GREY began with stating many difficulties which, from the nature of the subject, he had to encounter. He observed, that he regarded this bill as defective in principle, as it was objectionable in practice; forming, as it did, part only of a system which the present Minister had almost invariably, since his coming into office, and since the commencement of

the present session, without one exception, pursued with regard to that House, and the Public. He must still look to the principle upon which he was called to act. The Parliament was called together in a new and extraordinary manner.—Some gentlemen said it met the unanimous consent of the country—in this he believed they were right; for the people at that time had been taught to believe that the country was in a state of great danger, and therefore they thought the House met in extraordinary circumstances. The reality of this danger Ministers proved only by assertion. Some gentlemen, indeed, said, that as to the insurrections in the country they were so notorious, that it was needless to point them out.— Upon these general, loose, and vague grounds Parliament was called to act. Parliament was called upon to give its approbation of the conduct of the Minister, and to place in him implicit confidence, without one point of proof of any one of the assertions upon which the confidence was demanded. They were called upon for an armament; in this vote they were almost, but not quite, unanimous; however, they had voted for the armament, because they thought the country ought to be put into a state of defence, previous to any step being taken by Government; and because they thought that this measure was likely to preserve the blessings of peace to this country; in this, they only followed the King's speech, which gave Parliament assurances of a desire to that effect.

These were the grounds on which he and many others voted for this armament; but was that the ground on which a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) had given his consent? He said, he did not give his consent to an armament for the purpose of treating with the French, but for the purpose of bringing us into immediate and immortal war, and he (Mr. Grey) was afraid that the right honourable gentleman was not singular in that opinion. Could the House be justified in reasoning as these gentlemen reasoned? When he reflected on the applause which the right honourable gentleman received, he was afraid there were many others of opinion, that the ground stated by Ministers was not the real ground for the armament.— Mr. Grey said, he wished to put to His Majesty's Ministers one question, "Did they arm to negotiate, or to go to war?" If the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) was right upon

the ground on which he consented to the armament, then let the Ministry come forward and avow it. If not, what would they say to the people for misleading them, and plunging the country into a war without assigning any reason whatever for it? Ministers, he said, were called upon to declare, before Parliament separated for the holidays, what was the real state of this country. Pursuing the same system of affected insurrections, and voting armaments, without knowing any thing of the cause in which they were to be employed, and listening to the assertions of the Minister, was not the duty of that House; and yet the Minister now called upon them to vote for a bill which was to give to the executive Government extraordinary powers, without the least proof being before them of the necessity of the measure; the whole was to be done upon the footing of confidence. Mr. Grey here took notice of the distinction of free states voting extraordinary power in times of extraordinary danger, and those states, the executive part of which always having power enough, can act in every instance, without the assistance of a deliberative assembly; these might, he said, be justly said to be despotic. The former was certainly the characteristic of a free Government, but there was another characteristic of a free Government, and it was the chief excellence of our constitution, it was this: the executive power was never to judge of the necessity of that extraordinary power, it was always the province of the Legislative to form its opinion upon that subject; and, therefore, when any power was to be given to the Crown in cases of emergency, it must be given by Parliament. It had been so in the suspension of the Habeas Corpus act, and so it ought to be upon this occasion; these points were necessary for the safety of the British constitution, and the happiness of the people; none of these extraordinary measures should take place, but upon proper evidence laid before Parliament of their necessity. This brought him to reflect on the present case a little more closely; the result of which was still more unfavourable to the present measure, for if they were wrong in giving their confidence to the Minister at first without a cause assigned, how much more so should they be, when they came to give their consent to a measure utterly irreconcilable with the principle of the constitution, and the proper practice of Parliament, and a measure,

too, in which, from its very nature, it was impossible for the House to have any responsible person to refer to, in case the subject should require investigation hereafter, for that would be the case in the present bill. An honourable and learned gentleman had said, that we had a right to drive away a ship to sea from the coast, and perhaps expose her to future destruction, provided we thought that the plague was on board of her; that we had a right to insist on her performing quarantine, in order that we might be safe; and that such was, in some degree, the nature of this bill. He wished to know whether they meant to carry that doctrine to its full extent, for, in that case, no proof would ever be wanted; bare surmise would always be enough for proceeding at any time to the utmost extremity. But, indeed, if the plague was to come to this country from France, he believed it was much less likely to come by persons than by writings; every one point that had been stated in favour of the bill, failed altogether; there was nothing stated that went in the least degree to prove the necessity of the bill. Much, Mr. Grey said, had been urged upon a subject not directly before the House, but as it had been introduced, he felt himself in some degree bound to take notice of it, he meant the tendency of the book of Mr. Paine, and also the proceedings of the Constitutional Society. He must then declare, that he was not a friend to Mr. Paine's book, nor to the proceedings of the Constitutional Society, and he had no reason to believe that his principles were approved by them, any more than theirs were by him; and he must add, that he agreed with the answer given by an honourable friend of his, who being informed that the society had been industrious in recommending the perusal of Mr. Paine's book, had withdrawn his name, observing that he was a member of a society who were friends to the constitution, and therefore could hold no farther correspondence with those who recommended a book, in which it was stated that this country had no constitution. The honourable gentleman who spoke last had said, that whether there was danger within or without, this bill was necessary: what was the conclusion to be drawn from this? Why nothing more or less, than that whenever we go to war we may be said to be in danger, and therefore such a bill will in future always be necessary. We were told,

as he had observed, that there was a correspondence between societies in this country, and societies in France. Would this bill prevent such correspondence in future? Most certainly not. But this was like all the other measures of the present administration, founded on delusion and vague assertion, and on which the House were called upon, from day to day, to vote according to the will of the Minister, without one point of information, even upon the facts that were stated, the Minister's friends did not agree, of which he had a recent instance. An honourable and learned gentleman (the Attorney General) had stated, that, within three days, foreigners had arrived in this country, and had marched up to London, and these men were of such characters that some provision should, on that account, be made in the bill. No! said the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) they are most of them of a particularly innocent description; and yet, with this difference of opinion among the most sanguine friends of the bill, this was made one of the grounds for passing it as a matter of necessity. Mr. Grey wished to know how it was that we were to define the innocent from the culpable emigrant. He was as far as any man from wishing to blame the charity that had been extended to these unhappy persons; on the contrary, he applauded that charity; but at the same time he wished that there should be some point by which the really deserving were to be selected from others much better than the mere will or caprice of any Minister; but as the case now stood, it was impossible to make a proper selection. He had been told, he said, had it not been for the care of Ministers, these foreigners would have proved mischievous to this country. What did this imply, but that the Ministers knew who these persons were; and that with regard to them, nothing was to be dreaded; if that was the case, there could be no occasion for the present bill, as far as it regarded them, and the preamble of the bill could not be true, for in one part it stated—and whereas, under the present circumstances, much danger may arise to the public tranquillity, from the resort and residence of aliens, unless due provision be made in respect thereof. What danger, Mr. Grey asked, could arise to the public tranquillity, if care had been already taken to prevent them from doing mischief! He must observe, that, if this compliment to Minis-

ters for their vigilance be true, the preamble of the bill must be false: and the preamble ought to be, "Whereas a number of foreigners, whose principles are dangerous to the safety of this state, may come into this country," &c. This would be a much more safe and candid statement than that in the bill at present.

Another consideration on this bill made him still more unwilling to assent to it, he meant that it left all the execution, without any controul, to the will of the Minister. Gentlemen asked what temptation had Ministers to act amiss in such cases? What temptation—God knows. He did not suspect them of wishing for tyrannical power for the purpose of exercising it cruelly on any man; at the same time it must be allowed to be against all principles of justice to subject any man in this country to the will of any other. Besides, cases might occur that would be very hard indeed; there might be those who were friends originally to the revolution in France, and who wished to see the ancient despotism destroyed, and who nevertheless were friends to a limited monarchy, and yet these men might be driven by this bill into another country, perhaps back again to France, where inevitably they must suffer death. When he knew the force of prejudice in that respect, he was still the more unwilling that any man should be put under the power and at the disposal of a Minister. For instance, he wished the House to suppose the case of Mr. La Fayette, having taken refuge in this country, and that Ministers were disposed to treat him rigorously, could they not send him to Prussia, and would he not then be confined in a dungeon at Magdebourg or Wesel, where he might be kept for life, and treated with the most barbarous severity.

There was another man, M. de Puzy, whose case deserved to be noticed; this unfortunate gentleman had been three times President of the National Assembly in France, and was remarkable for his attachment to Monarchy; in consequence of which he had left France, and was now a prisoner at Magdebourg or Wesel; such was the treatment which the friends of limited monarchy, but the enemies of despotism, met with in these tyrannic States. This confirmed him in the opinion which he had long entertained, that it was a good thing for Europe that the combination against France did not succeed in their endea-



vours to conquer the French. Upon all the views which he could have of the subject, Mr. Grey said he must declare, that he could not give his consent to this bill, because there was no proof of its necessity, or of the propriety of its provisions; it was very objectionable on account of its being a bill to extend the discretion of those who could not, in the nature of the case, be responsible for the exercise of that discretion; it was true that the right honourable Secretary of State had said, it was a bill grounded on suspicion, and therefore evidence of the facts on which it was founded could not be given without defeating the intention of the bill itself; but all this dwindled into nothing, and the bill became a measure of oppression, when it gave power, for the exercise of which no man was responsible, and especially when the assumed ground of the bill had no foundation, namely, the danger of the country.—Perhaps, indeed, some time hence, Ministers, if asked to shew what they had done for the service of the State, would assure the House, that but for their interference much mischief might have ensued; they might say they had sent such a person out of the country: perhaps somebody might say, “I knew that gentleman very well, he had no views of sedition, he was a worthy and quiet man.”—“Oh, I beg your pardon,” the Minister would say, “you do not know him so well as I do;” “I sent him out of the kingdom to prevent mischief; I grant you, he did nothing against the State, but that is owing to me, for I took care to prevent him.” Such might be the excuses of Ministers for sending away such persons as they pleased. As the whole they assumed in this case was of a negative nature, it would be impossible to detect them if they acted from caprice, as the word “suspicion” covered every thing. He accused Ministers of no bad design or dispositions, but he did not like to give so much power without any necessity, and where there could be no responsibility. He must say, therefore, that without proof of the circumstances upon which the bill was alledged to be necessary, he must give it his negative.

Lord MULGRAVE insisted on the necessity of the present bill, in order to preserve the constitution of this country. His Lordship thought it strange, indeed, that gentlemen should say that there was no danger from seditious publications, when

their own eyes might afford sufficient evidence that every stall was covered with them. With regard to societies, he could not say that he apprehended danger from the very contemptible one established for Constitutional Information; but he confessed that he did apprehend danger from great and able men in that House lending the sanction of their names to their favourite principles, that he apprehended danger, and more especially when libels were taken out of the common course of disposal by Courts of Law, and when Societies were formed under the specious title of Friends of the Liberty of the Press, for the purpose of bringing the tribunal of trial by jury into disesteem, he thought it was time to be alarmed. This Society met some time ago, for the express purpose, and with a determination to blame twelve Englishmen for the verdict they gave, upon their oaths, on the trial of Thomas Paine for a libel, tried at Guildhall on Tuesday the 11th of December last. These resolutions would shew that it was the determination of the gentlemen of this meeting to censure that verdict, and to blame twelve men upon their oaths for their verdict. His Lordship said, the resolutions should speak for themselves, and therefore he would put the House in possession of their contents. [Here he read the resolutions\*.] His Lordship then entered into a

#### \* LIBERTY OF THE PRESS.

Free-mason's Tavern, Saturday, Dec. 22.

AT a General Meeting of FRIENDS to the FREEDOM of the PRESS, convened this day by public advertisement,

GERARD NOEL EDWARDS, Esq. M. P. in the Chair,

Unanimously Resolved,

1. That the Liberty of the Press is a right inseparable from the principles of a free Government, and essential to the security of the British Constitution.

2. That this liberty consists in the free discussion and examination of the principles of civil Government, and of all matters of public opinion.

3. That no writing ought to be considered as a public libel, and made the subject of criminal prosecution, unless such writing shall appear to be published with a design to excite the people to resist the civil Magistrate, or obstruct the execution of the existing laws.

4. That such publications may become proper objects of prosecution; and that the Executive Government is entrusted with powers amply sufficient for that purpose.

5. That we have therefore seen, with uneasiness and alarm, the formation of certain societies, which, under the pretence of supporting the Executive Magistrate, and defending the Government

detail of the nature and views of this Society ; he also took a view of the effect of libels in this country, and of the necessity of checking them, and paid a handsome compliment to the jury who tried Mr. Paine for his Rights of Man ; he extolled also the trial by jury, and hoped it would remain in its purity, when the efforts of visionary reformers were forgotten. He took notice of Mr. Erskine, his speech upon the trial, and his

against sedition, have held out general terrors against the circulation of writings, which without describing them, they term seditious, and entered into subscriptions for the maintenance of prosecutions against them ; a proceeding doubtful as to its legality—unconstitutional in its principle, oppressive in its operation, and destructive of the Liberty of the Press.

6. That such Associations have appeared to us the more exceptionable from an attentive observation of their proceedings ; whilst mutually binding and engaging themselves to enforce the execution of the laws against seditious libels, they have themselves produced and circulated publications, containing doctrines long since exploded, and which if admitted, would prove the Revolution to have been an act of rebellion, and the title of the reigning family to the Throne of these kingdoms, to be founded in usurpation and injustice.

7. That a system of jealousy and arbitrary coercion of the people has been at all times dangerous to the stability of the English Government.

8. That anxious to preserve the public peace as connected with public liberty, this meeting considers it as an indispensable duty to warn their fellow subjects against all proceedings, which appear to be inconsistent with either, on whatever pretext they may be grounded ; we are therefore determined to oppose to the utmost of our power every attempt to prejudice any part of the Constitution, to maintain that which appears to be its best security, the Freedom of the Press ; and to use our endeavours to counteract the effect of measures which seem calculated to suppress that liberal sentiment and manly freedom of discussion, which form the life and soul of the British Constitution.

9. That the thanks of this meeting are particularly due to the hon. Thomas Erskine, for his Constitutional defence of the freedom of opinion and the Liberty of the Press, in a late trial. A defence in which he displayed ability, independence, zeal, and eloquence, never surpassed on any former occasion at the English bar, though that defence was made under circumstances of such peculiar difficulty and embarrassment as required his determined spirit and unshaken fortitude to overcome, and though he had to encounter every prejudice which art and industry could excite.

By Order of the Meeting,

(Signed) GERARD NOEL EDWARDS, Chairman.

Resolved, that the thanks of this meeting be given to the Chairman, for his fair, honourable, and impartial conduct.

Resolved, that this meeting do now adjourn until Saturday the 19th of January next.

subsequent appearance at the meeting of the Society of the Friends of the Liberty of the Press, and of the part he took at that meeting. He complimented him for his great abilities, but disapproved of his conduct in this particular, and rejoiced that his eloquence and labour for so many hours were not a match for the plain common sense of twelve honest men. It had been said that the Association, which had expressed an intention of commencing prosecutions against the authors and publishers of seditious writings, were considered, in the eye of the law, as having been guilty of what an act passed in the reign of Henry VIII, called maintenance.

That act, however, only went to private suits; and therefore the accusation, in the present instance did not apply. If it did apply, an honourable gentleman who had frequently spoken against the prosecution of any opinions whatever, and who had been four months in preparing, and four hours in delivering, a speech, for the purpose of rescuing accused persons from arbitrary decisions in cases of libel, had involved himself in the charge, by signing his name to one of those Associations. His Lordship then spoke of the effect of French principles, and alluded to the proceedings of the 10th of August, and the 2d of September. He stated the fact of a gentleman having been hurried from his house, in the morning, to a Committee of Inspection, which was one of those Courts, that under an arbitrary Government would perhaps have been branded by the title of inquisition: but though it had all the powers of a Court of Inquisition, it was, in the present order of things, distinguished by the milder title of a Committee of Inspection. He was introduced to two Judges, one of whom was asleep, and the other telling him to sit down, as all were equal, accused him of having been the real Editor of an obnoxious paper, the nominal editor of which he had told him he knew to be a mere man of straw. The gentleman assured him of his innocence, whereupon he was accused of having gone to the frontiers and assisted the emigrants with money. He declared that he could not have committed that crime as he had not quitted Paris for the last twenty-three months. Three soldiers were then called, and ordered to conduct him to an hotel in the Fauxbourg, a circumstance of some comfort to him, after having been detained at this Committee of Inspection till eleven o'clock at

night; but what was his astonishment and alarm to find that this hotel, as it had been termed, was the prison of the Ab-baye! Here he heard the shrieks of murdered victims, and anon, a dead silence; and then, again, these horrid cries, mingled with the shouts of the mob, who called aloud for fresh carnage. After having been confined from August to September, he was taken before a Court of Justice, the executive Officers of which stood at the door without their coats, their shirts-sleeves tucked up, and their arms bathed in blood. He is told not to shew the least inclination to fly at the peril of meeting the points of the swords, which those who guard him direct against his breast. He vindicates his innocence of the charges alledged against him; and his judge, asking who is his accuser, and being told that he knows not, declares that, "if he could tell who was his accuser, he would cut his head off." These exclaimed his Lordship, are the effects of the damnable doctrines of equality, doctrines founded in error and injustice, and preached up with so much art and industry! An honourable gentleman had said, that these doctrines would be brought over into this country by sending soldiers into France. Such an act, however, was not necessary to bring those doctrines into the army, if it were likely that soldiers would imbibe them. Every means had already been used to spread these doctrines among them. But they scorned to imbibe them in time of peace, and it was not likely that they would more readily adopt them in war. It was for the purpose of preventing the mischief that must necessarily arise from the propagation of those doctrines, that the present bill had been brought forward; and he should give it every possible support.

Major MAITLAND observed, that the noble Lord had said, that such doctrines were not to be found in the British army. He was happy to hear that intelligence; but he must say, if a judgement were to be formed from the conduct of Ministers, they had proved that they entertained a very different opinion, by wishing to confine them in barracks.

The Marquis of TITCHFIELD said, he thought it proper to state the ground on which he should give his vote upon this occasion. He should support the bill, because he believed, that we had some danger to apprehend; but he must repeat what he had said already on this subject, that it appeared to him

that the calamity with which we were now threatened, was owing in some degree to the negligence of our Ministers. If they had been as vigilant as they ought, they might have averted the distress which this country was about to feel. He expressed no general satisfaction at the conduct of administration, but supported this bill merely because he thought it a necessary measure.

Mr. WINDHAM approved of the principle of the bill, as he had expressed himself on a former day; he had heard gentlemen say they knew not on what principle this bill could be supported, and he would, by way of general observation, say that he knew of no principle on which it ought to be opposed. He differed with many of his friends on the state of the danger of this country at the present time: and he must say, that when the session commenced, he thought there could not be much difference of opinion as to the existence of some danger, and afterwards when this bill came before the House, he hoped that the opinion of honourable gentlemen would be so nearly like each other, that the only question would be, what sort of a bill should be passed to protect the general interests of the country; but he was very much disappointed, for now he found that the whole of that ground on which the bill was founded was denied; he must declare, however, that nothing that he had heard yet, contributed to change the opinion he had formed on this subject before; he had heard no new fact, or reflection upon any old fact, that had in the least degree altered his opinion. Propositions indeed had been stated, but they were all liable to one objection, they were all general. Such, for instance, as that danger did not exist; or that Ministers deserved no confidence, or that the emigrants could not be distinguished the one from the other; these observations were very ingenious; but all that he would say was, that they were all very much out of their place, and to such general observations he could only return general answers, which was, that the accounts of insurrections, or of probable insurrections, and other dangers, could not be judged of by detached acts, but must be taken altogether, as it were in combination: it would be as ridiculous in Ministry, in such a situation as this country was in at present, to give to that House any specific fact which they knew of, as it was in the case, where a man,

to give a specimen of his house, brought a brick in his pocket. In this case single facts were nothing, but when they were taken jointly with other circumstances, then they became of importance. He did not like to go over these points, not because facts were not with them, but because the cause must suffer in detail. He said, he was far from being of opinion, that gentlemen on the other (the ministerial) side of the House, were the framers and artificers of the alarm, which had spread over the country, because that conclusion did not correspond with facts and dates.

Some time previous to the meeting of Parliament, he was so far from thinking that Ministers had shewn an endeavour to create an alarm, that he confessed the greatest subject of his alarm was, that Ministers did not state any thing upon the subject to the Public. He thought, that a sort of inattention, or supineness was imputable to them, and this was a cause of his alarm. As to the number of persons who were supposed to be disaffected, or whose intentions might be dangerous, he had never represented them as forming any thing like a majority in this country; if they had, we should not have walked the streets in safety, nor assembled in that House in quiet; but he knew that strength with such persons, although weak at first, must in time be very formidable, and they would take care to be well acquainted with their power before they came to act upon their opinion. He did not pretend to know exactly how these persons felt, or when they intended to commit violence, but if he was to judge from the confidence of the looks of certain persons, he would say that, according to their supposition, the time was not very distant. Here Mr. Windham alluded to the persons who were lately convicted of endeavouring to blow up the wall of the King's Bench prison; to the expressions of one of them, who had threatened to murder Lords Thurlow and Kenyon; to the correspondence they were said to hold with a Reformation Society in the Borough; to the aid they expected from a mob, after they had effected their escape; and then maintained that these things were evidence of public danger, and called for the vigilance of Government; and he was of opinion that the present bill was a proper measure to be adopted on this occasion. And as to the hardships which had been stated to affect certain French persons in this country, they

must affect somebody, and he could not believe that the discretion given to Ministers was such as Parliament should not grant. He maintained, that from the nature of the power to be given to Ministers, there was no probability of their abusing it. Besides, there was a material difference in the operation of a bill of this sort, as applied to the case of a native, and that of a foreigner. In the act of transportation, for instance, to a native, it is almost equal in horror to sentence of death; but to a foreigner, who came here, perhaps, from compulsion, and was eager to go away again, it was no punishment; to such a person, it was something like drowning a fish. In short, Mr. Windham said, he had not the least difficulty in giving this bill his support, and in considering this as one of the instances in which he was about to support Government. As much had been said lately on supporting Administration, it became perhaps necessary for him to say a few words upon that subject, otherwise he should have contented himself with simply giving his opinion upon the subject in debate. Upon the subject, therefore, of supporting Administration, he begged to be understood as speaking no sentiments but his own, as had been the case lately; not that he thought such conduct improper or indelicate; yet, as he had no such authority, it would be improper in him; he should therefore say what were his own ideas upon that subject. What did any man mean, when he said he would support Administration? Why he meant this, that he would support them in a fair, liberal construction of the word, which should be understood according to the time and circumstances of the Speaker, and Government—this was language for a gentleman on the opposition side of the House. When a gentleman on the other side said, that he meant to support Administration—What did he mean? Did he mean to say he would support Government right or wrong? Certainly not. No man could be expected to be so destitute of principle; it only meant that he would support them while he thought they were right, but to declare it was rather unnecessary. It was peculiarly the subject of debate in the year 1784, and was the basis of the difference between him and the present Administration; and he was still of opinion that the judgment of Parliament should have an unison with the general practice of Administration, and that none should be appointed



contemplation. On the necessity of the bill he had the misfortune to differ from his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox). The instances in which he had hitherto differed from him were but few, and he was sure they would not now be more. Such accidental differences he regretted only as his high opinion of the superior talents of his right honourable friend made him always suspect his own judgement. More than this it was not only unnecessary, but improper, to say. It would be unworthy of him, as a Member of Parliament, doing his duty, as in his conscience he thought right — would be unworthy of the character of his right honourable friend, whose generous, candid, and manly mind would scorn any support but that of men who supported him on principle, and who would openly avow a difference of opinion when they felt it. If the country had received much benefit from the exertions of his right honourable friend and those who acted with him, their present difference would be an advantage, not a loss. The Public would give them credit for the integrity of their motives, when they were seen to differ in opinion, and consequently for the same motives when they were seen to concur; so that he trusted their connection, by the present difference, would be strengthened, not impaired.

Mr. MITFORD said, that, in his opinion, the very reasons which had been adduced against the probability of danger proved its existence. He then proceeded to explain the clause of Magna Charta, for the purpose of proving that the present bill did not operate as the virtual repeal of that clause. Precedents, Mr. Mitford observed, were by no means wanting for the sanction of the present measure. In the reign of Henry the Fourth the influx of foreigners was greatly feared, and orders were issued, that, if vessels should arrive at the different ports with foreigners, those foreigners should be detained in the ports, as their influx was a subject of much alarm. The present act, however, particularly ascertained who were proper, and who were improper, objects to be received. Many persons, doubtless, who had joined in the first Constitution might wish to quit their country, but he trusted that no such persons would suffer. It was not intended to deny the hospitality and protection of the country to such men as La Fayette, and those who had been the framers of the late monarchical

Constitution of France. It was the opinion, he believed, of these men, that when they had departed from the form of British Government in framing a Constitution for their country, they had acted unwisely; and that if they had not done so, France might have still been saved. They were not likely to prove hostile to the British Government. An honourable gentleman had expressed a wish, that we could draw a line round France, or round this country, for the purpose of saving us from the contagion of French principles. The present bill tended to draw that line, and to produce, as much as possible, so salutary an effect. What the nature of the French principles were, was evident from the resolutions of certain societies, and from the writings circulated in this country. That dangerous doctrines had been introduced into this country was evident from certain cant words that were common. One of these, the "national will," he was sorry to see in the report of a late speech by a learned gentleman (Mr. Erskine). The phrase, he believed, had not been used by the learned gentleman, but inserted by the newspaper reporter; the insertion, however, was a proof that the phrase was familiar to the mind of the reporter. The resolutions of the Society at Norwich boldly avowed their principles, and stated, as one of them, that when the national will was freely expressed by the majority of the people, it ought not by any other power or authority to be set aside. He, for his part, Mr. Mitford said, knew no other mode of expressing the national will but by act of Parliament. The national opinion might be expressed without doors; but the nation had no other right, and could make no formal act, independent of its Parliament, than that of petitioning, though Mr. Paine had thought proper to treat that right with contempt. Another of the doctrines for which the advocates of French principles contended was, "Liberty and Equality." Such terms, however, were inconsistent; for where equality was established liberty could not possibly exist. Liberty and equality could exist together only on paper, or in the cry of a mob. Where distinction of orders was destroyed, Government was at an end. The principle of equality was totally inconsistent with a well-constituted Government, which, as in this country, having the people as the base of the pyramid, and the various orders rising, by imperceptible grada-

tions, one above the other, boasts the Crown for its point. Such was not the case in France !

Mr. Mitford here applied the following passage from Shakespeare's *Troilus and Cressida* to the present distracted state of France :

- “ Take but degree away, untune that string,
- “ And, hark ! what discord follows, each thing meets
- “ In men oppugnancy : the hounded waters
- “ Should lift their bosoms higher than the shores,
- “ And make a sop of all this solid globe :
- “ Strength should be hard of imbecility,
- “ And the rude son should strike his father dead ;
- “ Force should be right, or, rather, right or wrong,
- “ (Between whose endless jar Justice resides).
- “ Should lose their names, and so should Justice too.
- “ Then every thing includes itself in power,
- “ Power into will, will into appetite ;
- “ And appetite, an universal wolf,
- “ So doubly seconded with will and power,
- “ Must make, per force, an universal prey,
- “ And, last, eat up himself.”

In that country, in the language of the writer, Appetite, led on by Will and Power, would make every thing its prey, till at last it should devour itself ! There could be no government, no order, no peace, no security for Europe, or for this country, till the whole system on which the French had been lately acting was abandoned, and a better taken up in its room.

Mr. FOX said, that it was his intention to have taken notice of those subjects merely appertaining to the bill, but it had been treated in such a general manner, and so many collateral subjects introduced, that he found it difficult to proceed. He would begin with the state of the country, and examine what degree of danger existed when Parliament met, and what degree of danger existed now. His opinion on the first day of the session, and he hoped he should not be misunderstood, or what he said misinterpreted now, as had been the case then, was, that no danger existed to justify the measure of calling out the militia and assembling Parliament, and the manner in which this was done. His honourable friend (Mr.

Windham) had said, that the dangers alledged in the proclamation were not to be judged of in detail; that they would make no figure mentioned individually, but were to be estimated by the impresson made upon every man's mind, by the whole taken together. That they were not to be detailed he was ready to admit, for,

Dolus versatur in generalibus,

they would not bear detailing; if they were to be mentioned individually, they would appear so many insignificant circumstances, as to excite ridicule instead of alarm, and therefore his right honourable friend did right in begging that they might be so mentioned. The danger, whatever might be its degree, had two sources. First, the fear of the propagation of French opinions in this country; and next, the fear of the progress of the French arms. These might for one purpose be taken conjointly, but he intreated that they might be first considered distinctly, for he saw them in very different points of view. The propagation of French opinions in this country was, in his opinion, so very small, so very much confined, as to afford no serious cause of alarm to any mind of rational constancy. It had been said that the proclamation at the close of the last session of Parliament, had checked the growth of the evil; but this was a mere *gratis dictum*, for those who said so were not able to adduce juridical, for that was not required of them, but prudential proof that it had ever existed. What then was the alarm? Those who thought they had cause for alarm in May, might naturally think that they had still greater cause; that those who entertained those obnoxious opinions would disseminate them with greater confidence, would act on them with greater boldness when the French arms prospered. For parts of the country where he had not resided he did not pretend to answer; but in this town at least, and, as he had every reason to believe, in all other parts of the kingdom, these French opinions were not adopted to any degree that could be called alarming. His honourable friend had said, let them compare the phenomena with the theory, and they could not fail to be convinced of the danger. His honourable friend's mind, he rather believed, was so full of the theory, that he could not help inferring the phenomena, instead of raising the

theory from well-ascertained phenomena. He (Mr. Fox) had always said, that whatever progress the doctrines of France might make in other countries, they would make but little here, where rational liberty was enjoyed and understood. He founded his hopes of this on his own opinion of the Constitution, and the attachment of the people to it, and the event had justified his hopes instead of the fears of some other persons. If real danger had existed, if those from-whom it was apprehended had been proceeding to action, if they had been rising in arms, if they had been going to take possession of the Tower, (suppositions which now no man believed) then indeed calling out the militia would have been a wise and a necessary measure. But if no such act was impending, to what purpose was a military force prepared? To repel opinion. Opinions were never yet driven out of a country by pikes, and swords, and guns. Against them the militia was no defence. How then were they to be met if they existed? By contempt, if they were absurd; by argument, if specious; by prosecutions, if they were seditious; although that certainly was not a mode which he would recommend, but it was a mode which Ministers had before resorted to, and which they had still in their power. If, then, no act, founded on these opinions, was believed to be committed or intended, they who voted against the address on the first day of the session were right, for no good ground had been laid for the measures which they were called upon to approve. Could not Ministers have prosecuted Paine without an army? Was any apprehension stated that the trial would not be suffered to go in the usual course? He had been asked by a learned gentleman whether or not a book with an evil tendency was to be declared innocent, because not coupled with any act, and without proof of extrinsic circumstances? His answer was, Certainly not, but the evil tendency must be proved. Sometimes the evil tendency might be evident from the book itself; sometimes it might not, without being coupled with extrinsic circumstances; and where this was the case, the extrinsic circumstances must be proved to the satisfaction of the jury before they were warranted in pronouncing guilty. This was his opinion; and this, he thought, had been so sufficiently understood by both sides of the House in the debates on the Libel bill as to prevent any misrepresenta-

tion. The alarm, then, on the propagation of opinions could not justify the remedy which Ministers had adopted, especially when it was coupled with a false assertion of insurrections; and therefore if it did not create, it certainly augmented, the alarm—he meant not in the mind of his honourable friend: he had been full of alarm for several months—an alarm that had taken such complete possession of his ardent imagination, that he could attend to nothing else, and he feared it would be several months more before he could be set right upon this subject.—Another ground of alarm was the progress of the French arms. They who represented him as indifferent to that progress, did him great injustice. He was by no means so. He thought the same national spirit that, under Louis XIV., had threatened the liberties of all Europe, might influence, and actually had influenced, the conduct of the French at present; and he might perhaps think that this national spirit was more likely to collect and act now than at the time to which he alluded. He had even said that this country ought to have interfered at an earlier period. He differed from a noble Lord (Wycombe) who had spoken so ably, and with so much propriety, that he was sorry he could not concur in all the noble Lord had said on two material points. He was clearly of opinion that the navigation of the Scheldt, if not guaranteed to the Dutch by the letter of the treaty of 1788, was virtually guaranteed to them by that treaty, and, if they insisted upon it, would be a good *casus fœderis* for going to war. He differed also from the noble Lord in thinking, that however much he might disapprove of any treaty at the time it was negotiating, when concluded, it was as religiously to be adhered to by those who disapproved of it as by those who made it. But in all these cases both the contracting parties were to be considered the principal and the ally, and they were not to go to war, even in support of the treaty, without a mutual regard to the joint interests of both. In the present case he thought it probable that, considering the risk to be run, and the doubtful advantage of the monopoly of the Scheldt, Holland might prefer the giving it up to the danger and expence of a war. If so, surely it were not to force the Dutch into a war against their own sense of their own interest, because we were their ally. The decree of the French Convention of instruction to their

generals, he should also consider as a declaration of hostility, if not repealed, or explained to our satisfaction, always understanding that this satisfaction was to be demanded in the proper way. He therefore saw causes of external danger, and might perhaps think that it was in a great measure owing to the neglect of Ministers ; but when he saw the armies and the fleets of France, and recollected that we had no public means of communication by which any differences that had arisen, or might arise, could be explained, the danger appeared great and imminent indeed. When he considered the various relations in which we stood with respect to France, and the numerous points on which the two countries might interfere, the circumstance alone of having no public communication would in itself be a great cause of peril. For this reason he had voted for an army and a navy, not for any of the eccentric reasons given by his honourable friend (Mr. Windham), that he would support Ministers, not because he thought them unfit for their situations, but because he never knew a Minister so bad as that he would not trust him with a fleet and army rather than expose the country to danger. Having thus discriminated the internal and external danger, he would ask how the measures that had been adopted were the proper remedy. If considered distinctly, either the measure or the mode did not apply. If connected, the remedy for the one was no remedy for the other. If France threatened to invade Holland, or refused an explanation of the offensive decree, calling out the militia would be right ; but for crushing objectionable opinions or doctrines assuredly not. He knew not how to fight an opinion, nor did history furnish him with instruction. The opinions of Luther and of Calvin had been combated by arms ; there was no want of war, no want of blood, no want of confederacies of princes, to extirpate them. Were they extirpated ? No ; they had spread and flourished by bloodshed and persecution. The comparison of these with opinions of another description might seem invidious ; but it was so only if they were attacked by reason, not if attacked by war. By force and power, no opinion, good or bad, truth or heresy, had ever been subdued. But then, it was said, if we went to war, one of the weapons of the French would be instilling their opinions into the minds of our people. If it was, he

trusted it would fail. But would a danger so much dreaded in peace be less in time of war—war, it was to be hoped, would be successful ; but were we such children as to forget, that in war the sway of fortune was great, and that the burden of certain taxes, disgust at ill success, and indignation at misconduct, would dispose the minds of men to receive doctrines and impressions unfavourable to the Constitution? Even all this he hoped they would resist ; but it would be putting them to a severer trial than he wished to see. On these opinions it was not necessary for him to say, that he who loved the Constitution disapproved of the opinions of those who said that we had no Constitution. His love of the Constitution was to the Constitution on its old form, which had subsisted by constant reformation, and was of such a nature, that if it was not improving, it was in a state of decay. He was happy to find by the resolutions from various parts of the country, that, in his opinion, he was not singular. Like every human production, the Constitution was not perfect, and if it were, it would not long continue so, unless the practice of it were carefully watched, if that spirit of vigilance on the part of the People, which was its best security, were lulled to sleep. Melancholy, therefore, as the present prospect was, he saw more danger than ever from that prospect, from pushing the present alarm too far, making them see the picture all on one side—the dangers of anarchy only, while they were inattentive to the abuses and encroachments of the executive power on the other. If the bill was intended to guard us against internal danger, while we were at war with France, we knew that in 1715 and 1745 the French had not been sparing of attempts to sow dissensions, and excite rebellion in the country, and yet we had, by the commercial treaty, provided for the protection of the aliens of both countries, even after an actual declaration of war! Did it guard against the introduction of opinions? No—we had not yet come to the measure of prohibiting all French books and papers, which Spain had adopted about a year ago ; nor was the policy or the wisdom of it so much applauded as to induce us to follow the example. But these opinions were propagated by conversation. What! did a Frenchman, when he landed, find an audience to understand the terms of his philosophy, and immediately open a sort of Tus-



culan disputation? Were they disseminated in clubs and convivial meetings, where men were disposed to approve rather of what was animated than what was proper? The very idea of a Frenchman getting up to harangue in his broken, English, at such a meeting, was too ridiculous to be mentioned. If they were propagated at all, it must be by English agents, and these, if any such there were, which he did not much believe, would remain in the kingdom if every foreigner was sent out of it.

The preamble of the bill was a complete delusion, for it stated the extraordinary resort of aliens to this country, as the pretence of the bill, while every body knew that extraordinary resort to be occasioned by circumstances that had no connection with it. The spirit of it was kept up in the mode of the defence; for it was said by one gentleman, that 400 aliens had marched into London in one day; while another gentlemen (Mr. Burke) said he had examined these aliens, and found that they were not dangerous. Surely where that right honourable gentleman saw no danger, every body else might be perfectly at ease. Were an office to be instituted for the purpose of examining the opinions of individuals, and how they stood affected to the Constitution of the country, no person could be better qualified than the right honourable gentleman to conduct the enquiry. Those who should stand this test, and meet with his approbation, might be reckoned sound indeed. With respect to the emigrants, among whom it was meant to make a distinction by the bill, he would protect those who had fallen a sacrifice to their opinions in favour of the old government of France; not because he approved of their principles, but because he respected their misfortunes. With respect to those who suffered for their attachment to the new Constitution, he had heard it said by a person of high rank, that, if La Fayette were here, he ought to be sent out of the country. Was this to be endured? Was it fit to vest any Ministers with such a power, merely in the hope that they would not abuse it? The third description, those who had fled for fear of punishment, for being concerned in the detestable massacre of the 2d of September, all men would wish to see removed; but this was a sufficient ground for a particular law. The horrors of that day ought not to be mentioned

as the act of the French government, or the French people, for both disclaimed it ; but to disclaim was not enough. That the crime was not prevented or followed up by striking examples of punishment, would be an indelible disgrace to Paris and to France ; but were we to go to war on account of these inhuman murders? No war could be rational that had not some object, which being obtained, made way for peace. We were not, he trusted, going to war for the restoration of the old French government, nor for the extermination of the French people. What then had the horrors committed in France to do with the reasons of war? but they had to do with the passions of men, and were held out to blind their judgement by exciting their indignation. That we might have a rational and intelligible account of the object for which we were going to war, he had made the propositions on which the House had already decided ; and notwithstanding their ill success, he should not desist till such an account was obtained. The prerogative of the Crown to send foreigners out of the kingdom, said to be left untouched by the bill, ought not to remain in doubt. The single instance produced from the reign of Henry the Fourth was counterbalanced by another in the same reign, when the King did the same thing by the authority of Parliament which he had done before by his own power. He believed that the prerogative did not exist, and if it did, that it was too dangerous to be suffered to remain. If, on the other hand, it was a prerogative for the good of the people—if, indeed, the word people was not expunged from our political dictionary—the good of the people being the only foundation that he knew for any prerogative, it was fit that it should be clearly defined and understood, either by an enacting or a declaratory law. In answer to Lord Mulgrave, he paid a handsome compliment to Mr. Erskine, to whose abilities and perseverance it was owing that the verdict of a jury could now be had on the guilt or innocence of any writing charged as libellous ; and said, that he would have been guilty of a breach of honour in his profession if he had shrunk from the defence of Mr. Paine, or shewed that any man prosecuted in this country could be deprived of the advantage of counsel, where counsel was allowed by law. To the charge of inconsistency in having signed the declaration of a society against seditious

writings, while he thought such societies illegal, he said he did not understand the declaration as meaning to prosecute any writings by subscription; he had by what he said at the meeting expressly guarded himself in this particular, and was told that the money subscribed was not for any such purpose, but to pay for papers and advertisements. If he had misunderstood the one, or been misinformed in the other, he would withdraw his name. He had signed a declaration of attachment to the Constitution, because he thought it of importance at the present moment to let foreigners, and especially the French, see that men of all descriptions were firmly attached to it; that they had been grossly deceived by the addresses from this country, which told them that their doctrines were very generally adopted here—that they had been deceived by the Minister's proclamations, stating that there was great danger from their doctrines; that they were deceived by the alarms expressed by some of his own friends. This he had done, and every thing consistent with honour he would still do to prevent a war with France; more especially a war on false hopes, on one part, and false grounds on the other. On the subject of party-connections it was seldom proper, at all times difficult, to speak, and he was not called upon to do it. He would just only shew his honourable friend a few of the consequences from the doctrine he had laid down. His honourable friend would oppose a ministry where he had hopes of turning them out, and seeing his friends get into their places; but when these hopes were at an end he would join them. Many of those who had formerly opposed Ministers had done so; more would follow their example; but they had never dreamt that they should have so good a defence for their conduct as the system of his right honourable friend—a doctrine much more convenient for others than he was sure it would be for himself. Did his right honourable friend see the consequences of this doctrine? Could he, upon reflection, reconcile it with his high notions of honour? Was it a fit lesson to teach Ministers, that if by their misconduct the public safety was brought into danger, then they should have the support of those who had before opposed them? Was it proper thus to hold out a reward to misconduct? Would it curb the inordinate and selfish ambition of men in power to say, that if he thought

them so good as to resign their places rather than their country should suffer, he would oppose them; but if he thought them so bad as to sacrifice their country to their own love of peace, he should feel himself bound not only to withdraw his opposition, but to join them. Thus he held out a premium to a wicked and pernicious ambition, and, in fact, said to Ministers, in order to retain your places, and ensure our support to your power, you have only to bring the country to the brink of ruin. If his honourable friend did join Ministers, they would not have much reason to be proud, for on his own principle, in proportion to the support he gave them, would be his bad opinion of those to whom he went, and his good opinion of those whom he left. Mr. Fox concluded with moving, that the farther consideration of the bill be postponed to that day three weeks, in order to give time for enquiry into the grounds of the necessity alledged for adopting it.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that he felt himself called upon to speak on the present occasion, though from the circumstance of his absence on former debates, (an absence which the distinguished talents of his honourable friend left him no reason to regret) the ground of discussion had already been pre-occupied, and the greatest part of which he had now to bring forward, anticipated with a degree of ability which had its full effect upon the minds of the House, and had left for him only to urge the same topics. In the explanation, therefore, which he now felt himself bound to give, he should crave the indulgence of the House if he should be found to repeat what had already been fully insisted on. He observed that a great variety of matter had been introduced in this evening's debate; and though he thought that the bill before the House might be justified upon much narrower ground, still he did not complain of any irregularity, as he considered that matter as connected with the situation of affairs from which arose the necessity for the present measure. A right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) had assumed as a principle, that no bill of this sort ought to be brought forward, except upon some ground of positive circumstances upon which it was founded being stated in the preamble. He must remark, however, that this objection came rather too late, after four or five discussions had already taken place, more especially with

respect to a bill which was from its nature urgent, and which if it was proper to be passed at all, ought to be passed immediately. That he (Mr. Fox) indeed, who had declared himself an enemy to the principle of the bill, should propose a delay of three weeks in order to enquire into the circumstances upon which it was founded, was not surprising; and as this delay would take place chiefly during the holidays, a season by no means favourable to the forwarding of such an enquiry, the proposition was almost tantamount to the rejection of the bill; but it was by no means probable that those who approved of the principle of the bill, who thought it called for by the circumstances of the time, and necessary both to the internal and external security of the country, would easily be brought to concur in such a delay. The only ground indeed upon which this delay could be justified, was, that the present bill was an object of juridical and not of legislative deliberation. But would the right honourable gentleman deny, that the propriety of the Executive Government interfering in particular circumstances to send strangers out of the country, or to regulate their residence while they should remain in it, was a fair object of legislative deliberation? On different occasions, in the history of this country, the Habeas Corpus act had been suspended without any previous notice having been given. The present bill he considered as a measure of precaution, no less fair when there occurred an occasion that called for it, than an augmentation of the naval or military force of the country: it was founded in facts of notoriety, and the most evident deductions of reasoning. If he was called upon to state the particular grounds upon which the bill was founded, the only difficulty which he should find, was, that these grounds were in themselves far greater than the magnitude of the measure. If he should only state, that by some extraordinary occurrence, some unforeseen and inevitable calamity of nature, great numbers of foreigners had come into this country without the means of subsistence, without being brought for any purposes of commerce, or without any possibility of discrimination, even this he should consider as affording a sufficient object of jealousy and attention: but when it appeared that these came from a country whose principles were inimical to the peace and order of every other government; and though

many of them, no doubt, had fled here in order to find a refuge from the sword of persecution, there was, but too much reason to suspect, that among these had mingled emissaries for prey, regard for our own interests, and for the safety of the country, enforced the necessity of peculiar vigilance.

In addition to all these circumstances, we find that in the councils of that country, from which these persons had come, there had been adopted a system of propagating, by every means of art and force, principles inimical to the Government of every country, and that they were now actually carrying on a war against the established government of other countries, under the specious pretext of promoting the cause of freedom. When he had stated these circumstances, would it be said that the present bill had been brought forward without any evidence or ground of danger. But he now came to the climax of all. In this country itself there had been found persons who professed the same principles with those maintained in the councils of that neighbouring state, and held out the model of their government as an object of applause and imitation; nay, who had industriously propagated, and publicly avowed, that they acted with them in concert: they had held a correspondence with the affiliated societies of Jacobins; they had presented addresses to the Convention, and had there been received, encouraged, and cherished, and had in return met with offers of fraternity and succour. Was there then not reason to suppose, that persons might have been sent to this country, with a view of carrying on that concert? Was not this obvious to the understanding and feelings of every honourable gentleman present? He should state nothing from his own personal information, as he considered that there was in the present instance sufficient ground of action and decision without such information: he should only, in general, say, that, as far as he had opportunity of knowing, he had reason to be confirmed in every suspicion, which arose from that situation of affairs which he had now described. It had been asked, what were the number of those who had been concerned in enormities too shocking to relate in a neighbouring state, who were now in this country? He trusted, however, that the progress of the bill would not be stopt to enquire, by a select committee, what was the number of these persons, whether they were

eighteen or nineteen? what was the degree of mischief which they might commit, or whether they had been sent here for the most horrid of all purposes, with respect to the Royal Family. In all such enquiries the evidence that could be obtained was only by hearsay, which was always uncertain. The number of those persons, he could affirm, who had been concerned in such shocking enormities, and were now in this country, had been stated from good authority, and it was from a mistake that a noble person had been represented as having from no authority given any account of their number. But if he knew that there was one, that alone afforded sufficient ground of suspicion that there were more. And if there were more, it was to be recollected that these were not to act upon their single strength, but in conjunction with those in this country, who entertained seditious views. In this point of view, it was to be remarked that a mob, which might at any other time be disregarded, became in such a situation truly alarming, the smallest spark might produce an explosion, while they were a set of desperate individuals determined to take advantage of every public commotion, and convert it to their own purposes. The danger then arose not from individual strength, but from the consideration of the whole of the situation of the country.

A great number of foreigners had come into it; there were no means of discriminating their characters; and as they tendered the safety of the country, it became necessary that at the present moment these should be objects of prudence and vigilance. He was a little surprized how it was possible, in the present instance, to separate domestic from external danger; or how a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) on the other side, with that sound judgement and acute discernment which he possessed, could be capable of making such a separation. He should have considered the domestic alarm as sufficient ground for the present bill, much more when to it was added the consideration of external danger. If there were persons at home disaffected to the constitution, and desirous to overturn the established form of government, and if these were in concert with persons abroad, he should certainly consider this not as a less reason to guard against machinations at home, and to watch the conduct of those abroad. Was it not an evident consequence of this concert that the danger must be increased,

as the domestic and external danger would mutually operate upon each other? Yet after all that had been stated, there are some who pretend to tell us, that they fear no internal alarm, that they see no cause of danger. Notwithstanding the general sentiment of the country and of that House, they have the hardihood to treat the whole as the effect of ministerial artifice. Had ministerial artifice made those who had hitherto acted upon a system of opposition, now concur in the opinion of this danger? Had it made all the Members in that House, except ten or fifteen, agree in the same sentiment? Had ministerial artifice excited but one opinion in the country with respect to this danger from one end of it to the other? But it was said, that the alarm had been produced by the measures of calling out the militia, and assembling Parliament: he would ask whether the week before these measures had been adopted, the appearance of alarm had been greater or less than the week after, or at the present moment? It had rather been the business of his life to allay than to foment. He had expected his exertions on the present occasion to be seconded by the efforts of the friends of order; but he could hardly expect that the effect would be so great as that the alarm, which had lately prevailed in some places to a degree of despondency, should be so completely annihilated, that even the existence of the danger should in a short time after be called in question. But he should be sorry that the effect produced should be a sense of security, which must be fatal. While vigilance was maintained, he should consider the country to be safe. Those whom it was necessary to guard against were those who, in the moment of alarm, placed their hopes in obscurity, and waited till that alarm should have subsided in order to renew their machinations. He should now shortly point out what were the leading circumstances of the present time. What had they seen?—They had seen within two or three years a revolution in France, founded upon principles which were inconsistent with our own, and with every regular government—which were hostile to hereditary monarchy; to nobility; to all the privileged orders; and to every sort of popular representation short of that, which would give to every individual a voice in the election of representatives.



Writings had been published in this country, holding out this Government as an object of envy, and a model of imitation, decrying every other form of Government as founded in injustice, and inconsistent with the unalienable rights of man : representing this new system as holding out relief to the poor, inculcating a more pure and simple system of morals, and enlarging the circle of social happiness. How far it deserved this character, its own practice would best prove. Societies had been formed in different manufacturing towns in this country upon the model of the Jacobin societies in France, where the utmost art and industry had been employed to inflame the passions and mislead the judgement of the lower classes, and where the doctrines inculcated might be supposed to be attended with the worst effect. These Societies carried on correspondence with the societies and Councils of France, and received from them intimations of support. In addition to all this, we have seen a code of the laws of nations adopted in France hostile to every other Government, a system of anarchy and ambition, setting at defiance all regular authority, and treating as unlawful every thing which has been sanctioned by the laws of other countries. They had witnessed the effects of this anarchy in the country in which it had taken place: they had seen the progress of that ambition extending the same anarchy to other countries. Their new code of the laws of nations went to establish their Government wherever they should carry their arms. As their ambition was unbounded, so the anarchy, which they hoped to establish was universal. From the conduct which they had already exhibited, a judgement might be formed of the future course which they would pursue. Under the specious pretext of promoting the cause of freedom, they had shewn no scruple to annex the territories of their neighbours to their own dominions, and to force upon the inhabitants of the countries which they had entered, that freedom, which they were unwilling to receive, and of which certainly the state of their own country did not afford a very flattering specimen. Their own declarations had shewn that their views were not confined to particular countries; that their object was every where to propagate their own system, by all the means which art, industry or force, could supply. When there were men in this country connect-

ed with a people actuated by such principles, and pursuing such a system, it surely became a matter of the most serious consideration. Such being the state of circumstances, he put it to the hearts, consciences, judgements and understandings of gentlemen present, whether there was not serious ground of alarm? He had been told that calling out the militia had excited this alarm. With respect to this, there were two questions; first, whether the measure of calling out the militia was prudent, and expedient for the national safety; and, secondly, whether the laws authorised such a measure. In the circumstances which he had stated, any one insurrection whatever rendered this measure legal. Other motives not only justified it, but rendered it highly prudent. An insurrection, though not immediately directed against the Government, might give to the seditious an opportunity of striking the blow which they desired and meditated. An insurrection which called out the military, who, during the time of peace were not more than sufficient for ordinary purposes, particularly laid the country at the mercy of the seditious, and deprived it of all means of protection. Such was the general view of the state of affairs, combined with which there was a necessity of taking some measure against that influx of foreigners which had poured into the country. While all that House, and all the country agree with respect to the existence of danger, there were ten or fifteen in the House, who completely denied it; but even these could not agree with regard to the degree of its non-existence. In this respect, they were inconsistent with one another, and in some instances, inconsistent with themselves. A right honourable gentleman, (Mr. Fox) who though he had spoken last, was first to be attended to; though he disapproved of the principles, upon which the French acted—though afraid of the progress of their arms, was not afraid of the progress of their opinions in this country. On this score, he apprehends nothing, though it was particularly the interest, and had always been the policy of the French to sow divisions in those countries, against which they entertained views of hostility—a policy which in the present instance, could not be better answered, than by propagating their sentiments. Opinions, that right honourable gentleman had stated, were not to be opposed by force; they were to be resisted, first by neglect and contempt,

the mode of which he seemed most to approve; secondly, by argument and reasoning; and lastly, by prosecution, which, however, he did not greatly commend. He would only ask, what sort of opinions were those to which the right honourable gentleman had alluded. Serious and conscientious opinions, founded upon sober and dispassionate reasoning, he would own, had a claim to the utmost indulgence, and ought always to be treated with deference; but surely, with regard to wild and violent notions, assuming the name of opinions, but tending, by overt acts to overturn every established Government, and to introduce anarchy and confusion, a different mode of conduct was to be observed. Those opinions which the French entertained were of the most dangerous nature; they were opinions professed by interest, inflamed by passion, propagated by delusion which their successes had carried to the utmost excess, and had contributed to render still more dangerous. For, would the right honourable gentleman tell him that the French opinions received no additional weight from the success of their armies? Was it possible to separate between the progress of their opinions and the success of their arms? It was evident that the one must influence the other, and that the diffusion of their principles must keep pace with the extent of their victories. He was not afraid of the progress of French principles in this country, unless the defence of the country should previously be undermined by the introduction of these principles. A noble Lord, (Earl Wycombe) had said, that if a war should take place, the blame of that war must entirely belong to Ministers.

He would here beg to refer to the conduct of France. It had first denied the obligation of a treaty, which, though sometimes called absolute, had been considered as the corner stone of the balance of Europe, and repeatedly renewed; which had been coeval with the establishment of Dutch freedom, and was in fact necessary to the existence of the independence of Holland—a treaty in which France could have no concern, except in fulfilment of its own stipulation, to guard it against infringement; and which could only be matter of question between the Sovereign of the Dutch Republic, and the Sovereign of the Austrian Netherlands. France could only have one of two motives for interference—either as assuming to act as Sovereign

of the Netherlands, or because she has proclaimed a new code of the Law of Nations, by which she presumes to dictate to every country, and to model every Government by her own standard. Could we then, in this country, without resigning the spirit of independent Britons, and the faith due to an ally, submit to so insolent and unjust a claim as that of opening the Scheldt on the part of the French. But they affected, upon their present system, to despise all treaties, and to regard the one in question as extorted by avarice, and consented to through despotism. The second circumstance to which he should call their attention was, their decree of the 19th of November. By this decree, the French engaged to assist all people in procuring their freedom—such a freedom, he supposed, as they themselves enjoyed. We have seen, said he, French freedom in definition ; we have seen it in illustration, and have now an opportunity to compare the theory with the practice. Their conduct in Flanders afforded a specimen of the nature of their freedom. They had there endeavoured to propagate their doctrines, but finding the inhabitants not disposed to give them so favourable a reception as they could have wished, they had taken the method of inculcating opinions of freedom by force. Their General had issued a proclamation, that whoever should not embrace the tree of liberty, should be cut off as a wretch unfit to live. The noble Lord talked of their having given an explanation with respect to this decree. What sort of explanation had they given ? They had stated that it was not their intention to assist a few individuals, but only to interfere in cases where a great majority of the people should be disposed to shake off their government ; so that in fact it was their intention to promote rebellion in other countries, and to declare war against all established Governments. This sort of war was an inexorable war against all legitimate power, and which was only to terminate in its extinction. Formerly, the splendor of conquest had in some measure been pursued by the respect which had been paid to the government and rights of the conquered. The Romans were careful to preserve the government, the habits, and customs of those nations which they had vanquished, considering that as the best security for their conquests. For the present age had been reserved the idea of a war of extirpation—a war which should tend to annihilate whatever had been

been held most dear, or found most valuable. This was a sort of war which had never been carried on even by despots, and which was only exemplified in the conduct of those modern republicans who held out a system of what they called freedom and happiness. One honourable gentleman (Major Maitland) had declared, that the whole of the danger which had been held out, and the consequent alarm which had been excited in this country, was a mere delusion, effected by the artifices of Ministry. That honourable gentleman had at the same time stated, that the uniform misconduct of Ministry, since they came into power, was sufficient to have occasioned all the mischiefs which had been described, and to bring any country into a state of the greatest calamity. If this was the case, he, for one, could not but rejoice, that all these mischiefs, and all this calamity, amounted to nothing more than delusion. And while the honourable gentleman had deprecated all the evils brought on the country by the misconduct of Ministry, and particularly the danger of a war, to which it might be exposed, he had represented the present state of prosperity to be so great as to render it improper to go into this war. He should not attempt to reply to these arguments until they were a little more consistent, or think it necessary to give an answer to the honourable gentleman, till he should more clearly understand his own meaning. Mr. Pitt said, that he would not attempt, at so late an hour, to detain much longer the attention of the House, and for this reason would decline going into a detail of what had been alledged by other gentlemen. He should only advert to what had fallen from a noble Marquis, (Titchfield) who had accused Ministry with want of care, in not having sooner prosecuted those seditious publications which had occasioned so much alarm. He should only say, that Ministers had been attacked by other honourable gentlemen of having gone too far in the way of prosecution. He trusted it would appear, that there had been no want of vigilance on the part of Ministers. Within these two or three last years, many seditious writings had been published, but it was not till last year that they had assumed so much importance, as to render them fit objects of the attention of Ministers. The proclamation had then been issued, a measure which the noble Marquis and others of his friends approved, in which they had engaged to co-operate; and, had it ap-

peared to them that there were any seditious publications which had escaped attention, and ought to have been punished, it was their duty to have fulfilled their pledge of concurring in the measures of the proclamation, by bringing these forward to notice. The noble Marquis had likewise accused Ministers of having occasioned the present danger, by their neglect, which they might have obviated by earlier preparation, and a more speedy interference. He would only beg leave to remark, that it was not till lately that the danger had been brought near to this country and its alliance. It was only the retreat of the Duke of Brunswick, and the success of the French arms, with the consequences that had followed, events so rapid and unexpected, which it was impossible to foresee, and which defied even the smallest conjecture, which rendered the danger so imminent, and the necessity of preparations so urgent on the part of this country. It was not till lately the situation of affairs had occurred, productive of so much alarm to our allies, and which it rendered indispensable that some active measures should on our part be adopted. If the retreat of the Duke of Brunswick was sudden, and contrary to every view which was then entertained, no less so had been the events by which it had been followed. The amazing retreat, the progress of their arms, and the enlargement of their views of ambition, in proportion to the extent of their conquests, the effects of their new doctrine of the Law of Nations, had all succeeded one another so quickly, as to afford no time for precaution. The danger had already made an alarming progress before any means could be taken to prevent it. It was not till lately that the opening of the Scheldt had occurred, an infringement of the stipulations of treaties, and an invasion of the rights of our allies the Dutch, which rendered it absolutely necessary for this country to interfere, more especially as it seemed to open the way for farther violations of treaty, and more extended acquisitions of conquest. It was not till the 19th of November that the decree had passed, which menaced hostility to every Government, and the principles of which every nation in Europe was interested to oppose. He trusted it would appear, from attention to these circumstances, that as soon as the danger could be ascertained, measures had been taken to meet it, and that there had been no want of vigilance, precaution, and activity, on the part of Mi-

nisters. The noble Marquis had adverted to what had passed in 1784, as the cause of the present alarming circumstances in which the country was placed ; and to this origin had been ascribed all the mischiefs which now existed. In the present crisis, he considered that they had a more important and pressing duty to support the constitution, than to make a war of mere retrospect, which could not be supposed to influence the present situation of affairs, except it could be supposed that what had passed in 1784 had contributed to the French revolution and the events which had followed. If what had then passed had induced any man to withhold his confidence or good opinion from the present Ministers, it was a question into which, when there was leisure, he had no objection to enter. He trusted, that whatever personal impression might remain upon the minds of honourable Members, that what had passed in 1784 would not make any honest and independent Members neglect what was passing in 1793—that they would all concur to meet the present emergence by suitable measures, to obviate the danger by the most effectual means which could be devised, and unite their strength for two great objects—the safety of the country, and support of the constitution.

The report of the bill was now read and agreed to. The bill was then read a third time and passed.

The House adjourned.

*Monday, 7th January.*

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS presented copies of his correspondence with different parts of Scotland, relative to the duty on coals.—Ordered to be printed.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS observed, that on looking over the militia laws, he found that a clause for the relief of the widows and families of men balloted into the militia, which formerly made a part of those laws, had been omitted in the last act but one. As he knew of no reason for this omission, he supposed it must have been accidental ; and gave notice, that after the recess, he should move for leave to bring in a bill for the restoration of this clause, the operation of which would be retrospective, and extend to all persons who would have been entitled to the benefit of it, if it had never been omitted.

The House resolved into a Committee.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that on the quarter ending the 5th January 1793, there was a considerable surplus in the Consolidated Fund. Gentlemen would recollect that in voting the sum to be taken from the Consolidated Fund for the service of 1792, the growing produce was calculated up to the 5th of April 1793. They would no doubt be glad to hear, that the produce of the quarters, viz. up to the 5th of January, had been sufficient to defray the whole charge for 1792, and to leave a surplus in the consolidated fund of 435,696l. over and above. He should therefore move, that this sum be applied to the service of 1793.

The resolution was agreed to without any remark, and the report ordered to be received to-morrow.

The Committee of Ways and Means and Supply were then adjourned till Wednesday the 23d instant.

The House adjourned.

*Tuesday, 8th January.*

A message from the Lords informed the House, that their Lordships had agreed to the several amendments and additional clauses of the Alien bill; and their Lordships gave notice to the Commons, that they would farther proceed on the trial of Warren Hastings, Esq. on Thursday the 14th day of February next.

Mr. MICHAEL ANGELO TAYLOR said, he rose, in consequence of a notice given by a right honourable Secretary (Mr. Dundas) last night, that he proposed to bring in a bill for the regulation of the trade and fisheries of Newfoundland. He said, he had intended to move the House to order a Committee to inquire into some parts of the regulations of that trade. The bill proposed by the right honourable Secretary might possibly preclude the necessity of that motion. When that bill was brought in, he should be able to judge. Mean time, he wished the House to take notice, that if that should not be the case, he would, at an early day after the recess, make a motion to that effect. He observed, that a right honourable gentleman opposite him (Mr. Pitt) had last session promised to bring the matter forward early in this. He professed, and trusted that that gentleman would be convinced, that he had no object in view but the benefit of that trade: he



therefore wished that gentlemen would join him to give the subject the fullest discussion; and he assured them that he would, for that purpose, do every thing in his power to accommodate them.

A message was received from the Lords, desiring the attendance of the Commons in the House of Peers.

The SPEAKER returning, informed the House, that the Commissioners appointed by His Majesty had given the Royal assent to the following bills: the Alien bill, the Bill of Indemnity for restraining the exportation of corn, the Bill for preventing the Circulation of Assignats, and other foreign securities, and the Bill for farther Relief of Debtors.

The House then adjourned to

*Wednesday, 23d January.*

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, that previous to his bringing forward the subject of the renewal of the Charter of the East-India Company, many documents would be necessary to be laid before the House. He then moved for copies of various accounts of the debts, assets, &c. of the Company in India for several years, which were all ordered to be laid before the House.

Mr. Secretary Dundas then moved, "That the House do, at its rising, adjourn to Monday next." And then said, that on that day he should have a communication from His Majesty, which would augment considerably the forces of this country.

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, he should soon bring forward the subject of the slave trade. He thought that the better mode would be to renew the former resolutions of the last session.--- Upon this occasion he apprehended there would be very little discussion, as the subject had already been fully debated; he at least had but few observations to make. He thought that on Tuesday next this subject might be discussed.

The House adjourned.

The following Papers were laid on the table, for the perusal of the Members:

An Account of the **INCOME** and **CHARGES** upon the **CONSOLIDATED FUND**, in the Quarter ended the 5th day of January, 1793; together with the Surplus remaining for the Disposition of Parliament.

## I N C O M E.

	£.	s.	d.
Consolidated duties of Excise	1894778	13	0½
Do. of Customs	961981	2	8
Do. of Stamps	289020	0	0
Do. of Salt	100458	2	7½
Do. of Letter Money	89000	0	0
Tax on Hackney Coaches and Chairs	9700	0	0
Do. on Hawkers and Pedlars	400	0	0
Do. on Houses and Windows, 1766	137155	17	0½
Do. on Inhabited Houses, 1779	61910	5	7¼
Do. on Horses	51382	9	1
Do. on Male Servants	45532	10	1
Arrears of Female Servants	8322	9	10
Tax on Four-wheel Carriages	67433	3	3
Do. on Two-wheel do.	16488	16	3½
Arrears of the Tax on Waggon	1714	0	5
Do. on Carts	2052	6	7½
Tax of 1s. per lib. on salaries, &c. Anno 1758	12834	12	0½
Do. of 6d. per lib. on do. Anno 1721	13290	0	0
Seizures of uncustomed and prohibited goods	7393	10	1
Sheriffs Proffers	25	7	9
Rent of Alum Mines	480	0	0
Compositions by the Bank of England, in lieu of a Stamp Duty on Bills and Notes issued by them	6000	0	0
Stamp Duties on Bills of Exchange, Receipts, &c. pursuant to an act 31 Geo. III.	32150	0	0
Reserved on the 10th Oct. 1792, for the use of the Public, in respect of the Annuities for the Nominees appointed by the Lords Commissioners of His Majesty's Treasury, pursuant to an act 30 Geo. III.	12277	16	4½
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Arrears of the 53d 4s. Aid, Anno 1789	8550	0	0
Do. 54th 4s. Aid, Anno 1790	3004	15	11
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Imprest Money repaid by James and John Meyrick, Esqrs. arising from the Sale of Commissions in several regiments, vacated by the promotion of Officers	799	7	6
Do. by Kender Mason, Esq. on his account, as Contractor in East Florida	1000	0	0
Do. by Archibald Robertson, Deputy Quarter Master at New York	186	13	4
<hr/>			
	1986	0	10

Money paid by Charles Long, Esq. for interest  
upon 187,000*l.* for annuities granted by act of  
Parliament, 29th Geo. III. — —

4026 16 11

Total Income of the Consolidated Fund, in  
the quarter, ended 5th Jan. 1793

3839348 16 6½

## CHARGE.

## EXCHEQUER.

	£.	s.	d.
Annuities, 3 <sup>rd</sup> Excise for two and three lives, for three months, due 5th January, 1793	2048	18	0
£.3700 per week Excise, with the sala- ries to the Officers of the Receipt of His Majesty's Exchequer, for three months, due ditto — —	7957	11	8
1706 with do. — — —	6181	2	10½
1707 with do. — — —	2038	0	6½
per 1st act 1708, with do. — —	1229	13	1½
2d act 1708, with do. — —	2649	6	3½
Annuities on Lives, An. 1745, for 6 months, due do.	6159	2	6
1746, for do. due do.	11233	5	0
1757, for do. due do.	12283	12	6
1778, for do. due do.	1384	16	6
1779, for do. due do.	2587	9	3½

## SOUTH-SEA COMPANY.

Annuity and Management on 24,065,084 <i>l.</i> 13 <i>s.</i> 11½ <i>d.</i> their present capital, for one quarter, due 5th Ja- nuary, 1793 — — —	183993	13	5½
Annuity and Management on 1,919,600 <i>l.</i> for half a year, due the same time, after abating the sum of 106 <i>l.</i> 17 <i>s.</i> 6 <i>d.</i> for the half of 213 <i>l.</i> 15 <i>s.</i> after the rate of 562 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i> per million on the principal sum of 380,000 <i>l.</i> purchased by the Commissioners ap- pointed for the Reduction of the National Debt, be- fore 5th July, 1792 — — —	29227	0	3

## BANK OF ENGLAND.

Annuity and Management on 107399696 <i>l.</i> 5 <i>s.</i> 1½ <i>d.</i> 3 per cent. consolidated annuities, for half a year, due 5th Jan. 1793, after abating the sum of 706 <i>l.</i> 10 <i>s.</i> for the half of 1413 <i>l.</i> after the rate of 450 <i>l.</i> per million on the principal sum of 3140000 <i>l.</i> purchased by the Commissioners appointed for the Reduction of the National Debt, before 5th of July, 1792 — — —	1634453	17	6
Annuity and Management on 17869993 <i>l.</i> 9 <i>s.</i> 10 <i>d.</i> after the rate of 5 <i>l.</i> per cent. per annum, for half a year, due 5th January, 1793 — — —	450770	11	8½

£. s. d.

Annuity and Management on 1000000l. after the rate of 3l. per cent. per ann. for half a year, due 5th January 1793

15225 — —

Annuities granted by the acts of the 4th and 5th of King William and Queen Mary, and charged upon the 9d. per barrel Excise, commonly called 14l. per cents. which ceased upon the 5th February 1792, and is to be placed to the account of the Commissioners appointed for the reduction of the National Debt, for three months, due do.

12128 15 7½

Annuities granted by the acts of the 5th and 6th of the same reign, for 96 years, (commonly called Tonnage), which ceased on the 5th day of February 1792, and is to be placed to the account of the Commissioners aforesaid, for three months, due do.

1591 8 —

Bank of England, on their capital of 3200000l. after the rate of 3l. per cent. per ann. for one quarter, due 12th November 1792

25000 — —

Do. on 4000000l. purchased of the South-Sea Company, for three months, due 5th January 1793

30474 10 10½

Do. on 500000l. at 3l. per cent. per ann. for do.

3750 — —

Do. on 1250000l. at do. for do.

9375 — —

Do. on 1750000l. at do. for do.

13125 — —

Do. on 986800l. at do. for do.

7401 — —

To the Chief Cashier of the Bank of England, to reimburse so much paid for fees of various natures paid at the Treasury, Exchequer, and other offices, in relation to the accounts of the several Bank annuities, to 5th July 1791

896 16 6

## EAST-INDIA COMPANY.

On their capital of 3200000l., at 3l. per cent. per ann. for three months, due 5th Jan. 1793

24000 — —

Do. 1000000l. at do. lent anno 1744

7500 — —

To the Judges of England and Wales, on their several additional allowances, for three months, due 5th January 1793

3262 10 —

To Charles Bembridge, Esq. late Secretary and Accountant in the office for managing the former duties on Wine Licences, for do.

32 10 —

To him more, as late Messenger to the above office, for do.

5 — —

To Ann Cals, late Office Keeper to the above office, for do.

5 — —

To the Officers in the Exchequer Bill Office, on their salaries, for do.

162 10 —

For the support of His Majesty's Household, for do.

224500 — —

To His Royal Highness Frederick Duke of York and Albany, on his annuity of 14000l. for do.

3500 — —

To Her Royal Highness Frederica Ulrique Catharine, Duchess of York and Albany, on her annuity of 4000l. for do.	1000	—	—
To His Royal Highness William Henry Duke of Clarence, on his annuity of 12000l. for do.	3000	—	—
To His Royal Highness William Henry Duke of Gloucester, on do. 8000l. for do.	2000	—	—
To do. on do. 9000l. for do.	2250	—	—
To the Representatives of Arthur Onslow, Esq. on do. 3000l. for do.	750	—	—
To the Earl of Chatham, on do. 4000l. for do.	1000	—	—
To Lord Rodney, on do. 2000l. for do.	500	—	—
To Lord Heathfield, on do. 1500l. for do.	375	—	—
To Lord Sondes, late one of the Auditors of the Imprest, on do. 7000l. for do.	1750	—	—
To Lord Butc, another, on do. 7000l. for do.	1750	—	—
To Philip Deare, Esq. on do. 300l. for do.	75	—	—
To John Wigglesworth, Esq. on do. 300l. for do.	75	—	—
To Charles Harris, Esq. on do. 200l. for do.	50	—	—
To Sir William Musgrave, Bart. one of the Commissioners for auditing the Public Accounts, on do. 1000l. for do.	250	—	—
To John Thomas Batt, Esq. another, on do. 1000l. for do.	250	—	—
To John Martin Leake, Esq. another, on do. 1000l. for do.	250	—	—
To Sir John Dick, Bart. another, on do. 500l. for do.	125	—	—
To William Molleson, Esq. another, on do. 500l. for do.	125	—	—
To John Penn, Esq. of Stoke Pogis, in the county of Berks, one of the heirs of the late William Penn, Esq. on do. 3000l. for do.	750	—	—
To John Penn, Esq. of Dover Street, another, on do. 1000l. for do.	250	—	—
To Lady Dorchester, Guy Carleton, and Thomas Carleton, Esqrs. on their annuity of 1000l. for do.	250	—	—
For Clerks' contingencies in the Office for auditing the Public Accounts, for do.	1500	—	—
To Robert Hepburne, junior, Esq. Master of His Majesty's Mint in Scotland	1200	—	—
To George Earl of Leicester, Master of His Majesty's Mint in England, for three months, due 5th January 1793	3450	—	—
To John Reeves, Esq. on account of the deficiency of the fees, granted by an act 32 Geo. III. for the more effectual administration of the Office of a Justice of the Peace in such parts of the counties of Middlesex and Surrey as lie in or near the metropolis, &c., to defray the charges and expences attending the execution of the said act	3291	11	4½

To the Usher of the Exchequer,  
for necessaries for the quarter  
ended 5 July 1792 —

514 8 4 $\frac{3}{4}$ 

Do. 10 October 1792 —

499 12 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ 

£. s. d.

1014 — 10 $\frac{1}{2}$ 

To the Right Hon. Henry Addington, Speaker of  
the House of Commons, the sum of 1099l. 9s.  
to complete the sum of 1500l. for the quarter  
ended 25 December 1792, on 6000l. per ann.,  
the sum of 400l. 11s. having been received net  
at the Exchequer, on the allowance of 51. a day,  
out of the Civil List; and also the further sum  
of 80l. to reimburse the like sum paid for two  
years taxes on offices and pensions, for the per-  
quisites of his office, 0 Michaelmas 1792;  
making together the sum of —

1179 9 —

Total charge upon the Consolidated Fund, in  
the quarter ended 5th January 1793

£. s. d.

2764593 3 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ 

To the Commissioners appoint-  
ed by Parliament for redu-  
cing the National Debt

250000 — —

To complete the sum of  
2300000l. granted by Parlia-  
ment out of the Consolidated  
Fund, for the service of the  
year 1792 —

389059 11 5 $\frac{1}{2}$ 

Surplus remaining upon 5th  
January 1793, for the dispo-  
sition of Parliament —

435696 1 7 $\frac{1}{4}$ 

Total surplus of the quarter ended 5th Ja-  
nuary 1793 —

1074755 13 — $\frac{3}{4}$ £. 3839348 16 6 $\frac{1}{4}$ 

JAMES FISHER.

An ACCOMPT of the Total Produce of the Duties of CUSTOMS, EXCISE, STAMPS, and INCIDENTS, respectively, for one year, ended the 10th Day of October 1792; distinguishing (as far as possible) in each Branch, the Produce on every separate Article, the Duties on which have amounted to ONE THOUSAND POUNDS, or more, in the Four Quarters of the said Year.

The total produce of the duties of Customs for one year, ended the 10th day of October 1792, as per accompt (A.)	—	4,136,999	15	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Do. of the Excise for one year, ended do. (exclusive of 621,700l. the produce of the annual malt duties) as per accompt (B.)	—	7,838,703	15	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
Do. of the Stamp Duties for one year, ended do. as per accompt (C.)	—	1,445,447	7	4
Do. of Incidents at the receipt of the Exchequer, for one year, ended do. as per accompt (D.)	—	2,102,219	19	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
		<u>15,523,370</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>3<math>\frac{1}{2}</math></u>

Mem.—In this accompt are included fundry articles which are casual revenues, or taxes granted for a limited time, and therefore not a part of the permanent revenues; viz.

The duty on sugar, granted An. 1791, part of 4136999l. 15s. 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. the produce of the duties of customs	—	150,712	3	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
The duty on British spirits, anno 1791, part of 7838703l. 15s. 8 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. the produce of the duties of Excise	114307	0	0	
Do. on foreign spirits, a. 1791, other part of do.	146737	0	0	
Do. on malt, a. 1791, repealed by an act 32 Geo. III. other part of do.	124033	0	0	
		<u>385077</u>		

In the sum of 1445447l. 7s. 4d. the produce of the stamp duties, are included the amount of the taxes on, bills of exchange and receipts, making together

205253 12 5.

But by a clause in the  
act for granting  
these duties, there  
is directed to be ap-  
plied out of their  
produce to the con-  
solidated fund, un-  
til the Exchequer  
bills issued pursu-  
ant to an act 31  
Geo. III. are can-  
celled, the annual  
sum of

128600 0 0

76653 12 5

The additional tax  
on game licences

19833 16 7

96487 9 0

In the sum of  
2102219l 19s 10½d  
is included the  
duty of 10l. per  
cent. on assessed  
taxes, paid into  
the Exchequer

85956 2 2½

718232 14 8½

And also the imprest,  
and other monies,  
other part of the  
said sum

69028 19 0½

787261 13 8½

Presented, pursuant to an act of the 27th year of his present Ma-  
jesty's reign, the 31st day of December 1792, by

GEORGE ROSE.



An ACCOUNT of the Total Net Produce, paid into the Exchequer, of the Duties of Customs in England and Scotland; distinguishing (as far as possible) the Produce on every separate Article, the Duties on which shall have amounted to One Thousand Pound, or more, in the Four Quarters next preceding the 10th October 1792.

## SPECIES OF GOODS.

Net Produce, subject to the Payment of Bounties, and Charges of Management.

	£.	s.	d.
Ashes, Pearl	1070	19	2
— Pott	1055	6	3½
Barilla	29723	17	7
Beads, Coral	164	7	6½
Books, bound	1148	11	11¼
Bottles, Glass	1758	2	1
Brimstone	4666	13	11¼
Bristles, undrest	5529	10	8
Bugle, great	1232	16	3½
Callicoes	95773	9	8½
Capers	380	5	3
Carpets, Turkey	835	7	6
China Ware	18519	17	10½
Copper, unwrought	1794	15	4
Cork	5483	8	9
Corn, Oats	12904	10	5
— Wheat	376	3	5½
Drugs. Aloes Cicotrina	592	14	11½
— Balsam Capaiva	176	13	11
— Borax refined	528	6	10
— Cassia Lignea	97	19	3
— Cortex Peru	4585	6	3½
— Cream of Tartar	1170	7	4½
— Gum Copal	1388	15	11½
— Guaiaci	241	11	0½
— Senegal	3346	17	1½
— Jalap	783	8	0
— Juniper Berries	4958	19	1½
— Lead, Black	428	3	5
— Manna	490	13	6
— Oil, perfumed	1456	4	9
— Turpentine	94	1	11
— Opium	1677	9	8
— Quicksilver	2968	7	11
— Radix, Ipecacuana	201	12	10½
— Saccharum Saturni	2622	11	10½
— Sarsaparilla	2949	3	6½
— Senna	76	8	7½
— Succus Liquoritia	6174	0	6
— Tamarinds	702	12	11
— Verdigrease	2126	16	11

Dye Stuffs, Smalts	_____	_____	9962	19	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
Elephants Teeth	_____	_____	2495	11	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
Feathers for Beds	_____	_____	10875	0	9 $\frac{1}{2}$
Fish, Anchovies	_____	_____	977	12	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ Oysters	_____	_____	2908	9	0
Fruit, Lemons and Oranges	_____	_____	10888	1	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ Nuts, small	_____	_____	2868	11	8 $\frac{1}{4}$
Glass Plates	_____	_____	8247	11	9
Glue	_____	_____	590	10	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Grocery. Almonds, Jordan	_____	_____	3198	3	0 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ not Jordan	_____	_____	1912	17	10 $\frac{1}{4}$
_____ Anniseeds	_____	_____	1968	3	10
_____ Cinnamon	_____	_____	628	13	0
_____ Cloves	_____	_____	1194	15	0 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ Cocoa	_____	_____	1780	17	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ Coffee	_____	_____	20603	16	11 $\frac{1}{4}$
_____ Currants	_____	_____	61296	7	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ Figs	_____	_____	6739	13	11 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ Ginger	_____	_____	300	11	7 $\frac{1}{4}$
_____ Mace	_____	_____	1039	11	4
_____ Nutmegs	_____	_____	1944	7	6
_____ Pepper	_____	_____	16856	2	0 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ Pimento	_____	_____	11917	7	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ Prunes	_____	_____	3915	16	10 $\frac{1}{4}$
_____ Raisins. Denia	_____	_____	20386	13	3
_____ Faro	_____	_____	478	2	9 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ Lexia	_____	_____	12469	4	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ Lipari	_____	_____	2862	7	7 $\frac{1}{4}$
_____ Smyrna	_____	_____	2687	19	1 $\frac{1}{4}$
_____ Solis	_____	_____	20212	1	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ Rice	_____	_____	8435	1	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ Sago	_____	_____	1415	18	9 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ Succads	_____	_____	648	14	3
_____ Sugar, brown	_____	_____	1354752	2	11 $\frac{1}{4}$
_____ Tea	_____	_____	118622	15	0
_____ Turmerick	_____	_____	174	11	9
Hair, Horse	_____	_____	1290	0	6
_____ human	_____	_____	841	2	6
Hats, Chip	_____	_____	3034	15	5
_____ Staw	_____	_____	771	12	1
Hemp, rough	_____	_____	103833	0	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
Hides, Indian	_____	_____	139	19	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ Losh	_____	_____	565	1	8
_____ Ox or Cow	_____	_____	4518	5	10
Incle, wrought	_____	_____	3489	11	6 $\frac{1}{2}$
Iron, Bar	_____	_____	149556	2	0 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ Cask	_____	_____	1789	3	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
Kelp	_____	_____	1892	13	6 $\frac{1}{2}$
Linen. Cambricks	_____	_____	10441	14	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ Canvas Hessens	_____	_____	21186	16	9
_____ Spruce	_____	_____	7231	0	0 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ Damask Tabling, Sil.	_____	_____	1893	16	9 $\frac{1}{2}$
_____ Diaper Napkinning, Sil.	_____	_____	736	7	9
_____ Germany, Narrow, not above 31 $\frac{1}{2}$	_____	_____	29621	15	4 $\frac{1}{2}$

Linen.	Lawns, French	2228	0	0
—	Russia, Broad, above 22 $\frac{1}{2}$	20089	6	3 $\frac{1}{4}$
—	— above 31 $\frac{1}{2}$	1316	6	5 $\frac{1}{4}$
—	— above 36	8601	18	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
—	Drilling	4042	6	2 $\frac{1}{4}$
—	Narrow	6534	4	9
—	Towelling and Napkining	2100	13	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
Mats, Russia		4250	18	4 $\frac{1}{4}$
Melasses		2365	6	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
Muslin		118786	4	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
Oil, Ordinary		14314	8	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
— Sallad		4300	16	5
Paper, Foolscap, Genoa, Second		993	8	9
Pictures		3397	0	0
Pitch		521	9	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Salt		2568	7	9 $\frac{1}{2}$
Salt Petre		6749	11	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
Seeds, Clover		5147	2	11 $\frac{1}{4}$
Silk.	Italian and Turkey, Raw	57206	17	0
—	Bengal, Raw	57410	17	5
—	China, Raw	30128	10	2
—	Italian, Thrown	152831	7	2
—	Wro.	838	6	10
Skins.	Bear, Black	1213	10	6
—	Beaver	1023	10	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
—	Calf, Undrest	2889	1	7 $\frac{1}{2}$
—	— Tanned	6540	18	11 $\frac{1}{2}$
—	Deer, in Hair	3381	10	8
—	Fox, Ordinary	914	4	11
—	Goat, Tanned	2091	16	8
—	Kid, Drest	1136	19	0
—	— Undrest	4217	0	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
—	Martin	2937	3	8
—	Mink	549	15	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
—	Musquash	397	3	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
—	Otter	863	6	3 $\frac{1}{2}$
—	Raccoon	391	9	8 $\frac{1}{4}$
—	Seal	1377	0	5
—	Wolf	1,652	11	4
Snuff		856	2	6
Soap, Hard		477	19	8 $\frac{1}{4}$
Spirits, Brandy—Customs only		49647	4	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
—	Geneva do.	23890	13	6 $\frac{1}{2}$
—	Rum do.	46958	18	4
Stones, Blocks of Marble		1670	0	5
Tapes, Open		306	10	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
Tar		6042	18	3
Thread, Sisters		1855	5	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
Tobacco—Customs only		220310	13	9
Tow		1033	17	5 $\frac{1}{2}$
Turpentine		14662	2	0
Wax, Bees		4275	12	2 $\frac{1}{2}$
Wine. Canary—Customs only		1536	9	1
—	French do.	32826	19	2

— Madeira	do.	—	28342	8	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
— Port	do.	—	467309	3	5
— Rhenish	do.	—	3770	7	11 $\frac{1}{4}$
— Spanish	do.	—	84120	4	6
Wood. Balks	—	—	1263	14	5 $\frac{1}{4}$
— Battens	—	—	12063	3	8 $\frac{1}{2}$
— Deals	—	—	129956	3	6
— Deal Ends	—	—	4044	3	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
— Lathwood	—	—	4761	14	0 $\frac{1}{4}$
— Mafts	—	—	2726	12	5
— Oak Plank	—	—	3327	5	4 $\frac{1}{4}$
— Paling Boards	—	—	1200	4	3 $\frac{1}{4}$
— Scaleboards	—	—	747	19	6 $\frac{1}{2}$
— Staves	—	—	7682	10	9 $\frac{1}{2}$
— Timber, Fir	—	—	83793	1	10 $\frac{1}{2}$
— — Oak	—	—	662	14	4 $\frac{1}{2}$
— Ufers	—	—	1257	16	1 $\frac{1}{2}$
— Wainfcot Boards	—	—	1257	10	8 $\frac{1}{4}$
— — Logs	—	—	2646	15	10 $\frac{1}{4}$
Yarn, Cotton	—	—	389	19	6
— Mohair	—	—	1300	10	9
Allum	—	—	3268	12	2 $\frac{3}{4}$
Coals exported to Foreign Parts	—	—	121064	4	1
Lead	—	—	27348	2	2
Tin	—	—	5685	13	6
Subsidy on sundry small Articles	—	—	3445	19	3 $\frac{1}{4}$
Coals Coastwise	—	—	580036	19	8 $\frac{1}{4}$
Duties on Windows, by the 24th Geo. III.	—	—	22,924	10	9
Sundry small Articles—also small Balances remain- ing in the Hand of different Collectors, in the different Ports of Great Britain	—	—	196923	15	10
			5248361	1	1

## DISCHARGE.

By Bounties	—	—	648103	1	11 $\frac{1}{2}$
Management	—	—	384712	15	6 $\frac{1}{4}$
Exchequer Payments—(See a Note below)	—	—	4136999	15	4 $\frac{3}{4}$
Monies issued out of the Revenue in Scotland, applicable to His Majesty's Civil Govern- ment	—	—	78545	8	2
			5248361	1	1

Note—In the above Payments into the Exchequer, amounting to 4136999l. 15s. 4 $\frac{1}{4}$ d. is included a Sum of 150712l. 3s 4 $\frac{1}{2}$ d. which is applicable to the special Purpose directed by the Act of the 31st of His Majesty.

THOMAS IRVING,

Inspector General of the Imports and Exports  
of Great Britain and the British Colonies.

**EXCISE.**—An ACCOUNT of the Total Net Produce, paid into the Exchequer, of the Duties of Excise in England and Scotland; diffin-  
guishing (as far as possible) the Produce on every separate Article, the Duties on which shall have amounted to One Thousand Pounds or  
more, in the Four Quarters next preceding the 10th of October 1792.

PARLIAMENTARY

A, 1793.

	First Quarter, from 10 Oct. 1791 to 5 Jan. 1792.	Second Quarter, from 5 Jan. 1792 to 5 April 1792.	Third Quarter, from 5 Apr. 1792 to 5 July 1792.	Fourth Quarter, from 5 July 1792 to 10 Oct. 1792.	Total Net Pro- duce of the Four Quarters.
Auctions	17371	16919	20252	24699	79241
Beer	365979	396494	768453	480947	2012373
Bricks and Tiles	54621	11072	3409	49612	118714
Candles	58907	116654	69988	23219	268768
Coaches built for sale	649	150	428	970	2197
Cocoa Nuts and Coffee	12791	7544	7430	10643	38408
Cyder, Perry, and Verjuice	4392	1307	5843	12154	23596
Glas	32133	41197	32703	37027	143040
Hides, Skins, Vellum, and Parchment	53394	63543	52480	64443	233960
Hops	—	—	82776	—	82776
Malt, perpetual duty	147187	—	97067	367981	612235
Metheglin, or Mead and Vinegar	5420	1998	2657	12875	22950
Paper	17413	17799	14145	19448	68805
Printed Goods	52137	61121	28650	60074	201982
Soap	99338	77633	78195	95038	35064
Spirits { British	123821	237951	229926	52406	644104
{ Foreign	187013	195698	149737	171944	704392
Starch	27941	26004	25297	25160	104402

A. 1793.

## DEBATES.

Sweets	445	0	0	1889	0	0	6253	0	0	19488	0	0	8 $\frac{1}{4}$
Tea	159834	0	0	80538	0	0	170760	15	8 $\frac{1}{4}$	462248	15	0	8 $\frac{1}{4}$
Tobacco and Snuff, commenced 1 <sup>st</sup> Oct. 1789	78472	0	0	74637	0	0	77545	0	0	313241	0	0	0
Verjuice is with Cyder and Perry.													
Vinegar is with Methueglin.													
Wine	106225	0	0	61631	0	0	77220	0	0	373962	0	0	0
Wire	401	0	0	501	0	0	801	0	0	2280	0	0	0
Licences to Auctioneers is with Auctions.													
Coachmakers is with Coaches.													
Dealers in Coffee, Chocolate, and Tea													
Makers and Sellers of Wax and Spermaceti Candles is with Candles.	3345	0	0	2395	0	0	2486	0	0	13412	0	0	0
Makers of, and Dealers in, Exciseable Commodities													
Retailers of Spirituous Liquors	39355	0	0	5039	0	0	2990	0	0	44695	0	0	0
Retailers of Wine	148952	0	0	6169	0	0	2115	0	0	160794	0	0	0
Sellers of Gold and Silver Plate	26580	0	0	1832	0	0	660	0	0	30264	0	0	0
Manufacturers and Dealers in Tobacco and Snuff is with Tobacco and Snuff.	2185	0	0	1716	0	0	1892	0	0	8625	0	0	0
Duties com- menced 5 <sup>th</sup> Jan. 1793	19057	0	0	42927	0	0	40948	0	0	111307	0	0	0
Spirits { British	37031	0	0	38717	0	0	39377	0	0	142737	0	0	0
Foreign	37209	0	0							118033	0	0	0
Malt													
Total of Duties, except Malt annual	1910598	0	0	1590995	0	0	2084188	15	8 $\frac{1}{4}$	7507203	15	8 $\frac{1}{4}$	317
Annual Malt, Mum, Cyder, and Perry	136494	0	0	6058	0	0	166324	0	0	607200	0	0	0
Total of England	2047092	0	0	1597053	0	0	22250512	15	8 $\frac{1}{4}$	2219746	0	0	81

An Account of the Duties of EXCISE paid into the Exchequer, by the Commissioners of Excise in England, in One Year, between the 10th of October, 1791, and 10th of October, 1792, on the Part of SCOTLAND.

	First Quarter, from 10 Oct. 1791 to 5 Jan. 1792.	Second Quarter, from 5 Jan. 1792 to 5 April 1792.	Third Quarter, from 5 Apr. 1792 to 10 July 1792.	Fourth Quarter, from 5 July 1792 to 10 Oct. 1792.	Total Net Pro- duce of the Four Quarters.
Auctions	1000 0 0	—	2000 0 0	1000 0 0	4000 0 0
Beer and Ale	10000 0 0	5000 0 0	5000 0 0	5000 0 0	25000 0 0
Bricks and Tiles	1000 0 0	2000 0 0	—	—	3000 0 0
Candles	2000 0 0	—	3000 0 0	3000 0 0	8000 0 0
Cocoa Nuts and Coffee	—	—	—	—	—
General Licences	—	—	—	—	—
Glass	3000 0 0	2000 0 0	1000 0 0	—	3000 0 0
Hides and Skins	—	3000 0 0	4000 0 0	2000 0 0	12000 0 0
Malt, perpetual Duty	10000 0 0	7000 0 0	4500 0 0	2000 0 0	2000 0 0
Paper	2000 0 0	1000 0 0	1000 0 0	8000 0 0	29500 0 0
Printed Goods	16000 0 0	21000 0 0	14000 0 0	2000 0 0	6000 0 0
Soap	3000 0 0	5000 0 0	5500 0 0	17000 0 0	68000 0 0
Spirits { British	12000 0 0	10000 0 0	12000 0 0	7000 0 0	20000 0 0
Foreign	3000 0 0	5000 0 0	3000 0 0	8000 0 0	42000 0 0
Starch	2000 0 0	2000 0 0	2000 0 0	7000 0 0	18000 0 0
Tobacco and Snuff	10000 0 0	8000 0 0	7000 0 0	2000 0 0	8000 0 0
Wine	9000 0 0	8000 0 0	8000 0 0	8000 0 0	33000 0 0
Licences { Tea	—	—	500 0 0	5000 0 0	30000 0 0
Plate	—	—	500 0 0	—	500 0 0
Spiritous Liquor	—	2000 0 0	3000 0 0	1000 0 0	6000 0 0

Malt, perpetual Duty, commenced 5th Jan. 1791	—	—	4500	0	0	500	0	0	1000	0	6000	0
Foreign Spirits, additional	—	—	2000	0	0	2000	0	0	—	—	4000	0
British Spirits, do.	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	—	3000	0	3000	0
Total of Duties, except Malt annual	—	84000	0	0	0	78000	0	0	82000	0	331500	0
Annual Malt, Mum, Cyder, and Perry	—	5000	0	0	0	—	—	—	4000	0	14500	0
Total of Scotland	—	89000	0	0	0	78000	0	0	86000	0	346000	0
Perpetual Duties { England	—	7507203	15	8 $\frac{1}{4}$								
{ Scotland	—	331500	0	0								
Total of Perpetual Duties	—	—	—	—	7838703	15	8 $\frac{1}{4}$					
Malt { England	—	607200	0	0								
Annual { Scotland	—	14500	0	0								
Duties {	—	—	—	—								
Total of Malt Annual, &c.	—	—	—	—	621700	0	0					
Total	—	8460403	15	8 $\frac{1}{4}$								

Excise Office,

London, 12th Dec. 1792.

JAMES WEBB, Account. Gen.  
JAMES BROWNE, P. Compt.



An ACCOUNT of the Total Net Produce of the Duties arising from the STAMP REVENUE, that have amounted to 10col., or more, in the Four Quarters next preceding the 10th of October 1792:

	£.	s.	d.
Consolidated Duties —	748470	15	6
Insurance — —	120653	10	8
Burials, &c. —	4776	10	4
Hats — —	12184	11	3
Plate — —	28967	17	5
Post Horse Duty —	195016	16	8
Medicine —	12738	18	7
Game — —	46163	7	0
Attornies — —	24882	8	5
Pawnbrokers —	4520	4	6
Glove — —	6231	7	11
Perfumery —	5858	10	6
Judges Duty —	1373	13	10
Bills of Exchange —	156587	7	8
Receipts — —	48666	4	9
Additional Game, 1791	19833	16	7
Apprentice Duty —	8521	5	9
	<hr/>		
	1445447	7	4

Mem.

The Tax, on Bills of Exchange, as above  
Do. . . . on Receipts

156587	7	8
48666	4	9

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205253	12	5
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Of the Produce of these Taxes, the Average Produce of 3 Years is directed by an Act 31 Geo. III. to be carried to the Consolidated Fund

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128600	0	0
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And the Remainder is applicable towards paying Principal and Interest of Exchequer Bills, issued Anno 1791

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76653	12	5
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Stamp Office,  
Dec. 24th 1792.

J. LLOYD, pro Compt.

An Account of the Total Net Produce, paid into the Exchequer, of the Duties, under the head of Incidents ; distinguishing, (as far as possible) in each branch, the produce on every separate article, the duties on which shall have amounted to 1000l. or more, in the four quarters next preceding the 10th of October, 1793.

		£.	s.	d.
Confol. Salt, 1787	—	377232	4	3
Letter Money, per week	—	159000	0	0
Letter Money, 1760	—	227484	3	9½
Seizures, 1760	—	28522	9	11
Alienation Duty	—	2272	15	4
Hawkers, 1710	—	3828	11	4
Hackney Coaches, 1711	—	8400	0	0
Ditto, 1784	—	10000	0	0
6d. per lib. on pensions	—	47780	0	0
1s. deduct. on Salaries	—	43517	9	3½
First Fruits	—	4339	10	1½
Tenth	—	9902	14	3½
Male Servants, 1785	—	100065	11	0½
Female ditto	—	3328	11	1½
4-Wheel Carriages	—	165	8	1½
2-Wheel ditto	—		11	5½
Waggons	—		19	10½
Carts	—	10107	18	1½
Horses	—	32	8	2½
Shops	—	1042	10	3
10l. per Cent.	—	85956	2	3½
Houses and Windows, 1766	—	387923	15	10
Houses, 1778	—	146827	10	11
		2031574	5	7½
The Produce of Duties under 1000l. amounts to		1616	15	3
		2033191	0	10½

	£.	s.	d.
MONEY paid by Charles Long, Esq. for Interest on 187,000 <i>l.</i> for Annuities granted by an Act of Parliament, 29th George the Third —	4026	16	11
Do. by Messrs. Meyrick, arising from the Sale of Commissions in several regiments, vacated by the promotion of officers —	2549	7	6
Do. by Messrs. Bishop and Brumell, do. —	798	17	0
Do. by Alexander Adair, do. —	1501	18	0
Do. by James Russell, do. —	549	8	6
Do. by Messrs. Ross and Ogilvie, do. —	1713	18	0
Do. by Nathaniel Collyer, do. —	549	8	6
Do. by Messrs. Lamb and Cock, do. —	1101	18	6
Do. by Messrs. Cox and Greenwood, do. —	13628	8	6
Imprest Money repaid by Messrs. Pomroy and Kender Mason, executors of Kender Mason, on account of an agreement for victualling 3000 militia in East Florida —	2000	0	0
Do. by Lieut. Col. George Clerk, late Barrack Master in North America —	140	2	4 $\frac{3}{4}$
Do. by Daniel Macnamara, Esq. agent to the executors of Richard Rigby, Esq. late Paymaster of the Forces —	16884	15	6
Imprest Money repaid by Peregrine Francis Thomas, Esq. —	81	18	4
Money paid by Edward Roberts, Esq. for the Consol. Fund —	1171	6	4
Do. by — Armstrong, arising from the Sale of Commissions in several Regiments, vacated by the promotion of Officers —	3198	10	0
Do. by Humphrey Donaldson, for do. —	1799	8	0
Do. by Richard Muesworth, for do. —	149	9	0
Do. by Kender Mason, Esq. Exor. of Kender Mason, on his Account, as Contractor in East Florida —	1000	0	0
Do. by William Brummell, Esq. Agent for the Out-Pensioners of Chelsea Hospital —	3000	0	0
Do. by the Exors. of John Cowan, late Agent in East Florida —	351	11	11
Do. by Sarah Dickenson and Granville Sharp, Exors. of Elizabeth Oglethorpe, Extrix. of James Oglethorpe, late Agent in South Carolina and Georgia —	841	17	8
Money paid by Messrs. Cox and Greenwood, on Account of Col. Allan Maclean, for the Purchase of a Ship for transporting the late 84th Regiment —	1028	2	6
Do. by John Johnstone, Esq. Exor. of George Johnstone, Esq. late Governor of West Florida, in the Years 1765, 1766, and 1767 —	179	19	0 $\frac{1}{2}$
Do. by George Watts, Esq. Rec. Gen. of the Isle of Man —	5000	0	0
Money paid by William Cowder, Agent to the 16th Regiment of Dragoons —	171	4	7

	£.	s.	d.
Money paid by William Mitford, Esq. remitted from Barbadoes	338	3	4
Do. by Timothy Nucella, Jun. on Account of Life Annuities granted in the Year 1746	20	0	0
Do. by Senhouse Wilson, Esq. Rec. Gen. of the Isle of Man	1	13	9½
Imprest Money, repaid by Captain John Barnes, by the Hands of Captain William Twiss	251	5	0
Do. by Lord Barrington, late Treasurer of the Navy	2914	13	5½
Money paid by the Right hon. William Pitt, for the Use of Government	20	0	0
Do. by William Mitford, remitted from Canada on Account of a Debt to the Public	796	18	8
Imprest Money repaid by the Rt. hon. Lord Howe, late Treasurer of the Navy	150	15	5
Money paid by William Barr, Esq. appointed to provide the Necessaries for the Hospital in Canada	17	2	8
Do. by Kender Mason, executor of Kender Mason, Esq. on his Account, as Contractor in East Florida	1000	0	0
Do. by Alex. Anderson, on Account of William Nesbitt, Clerk of the Council in St. John's Island, for the Year 1792		0	0

Total of INCIDENTS

3 19  
1 0 10½  
19 19 10½

Exchequer,  
the 19th Day of Dec. 1792.

Ex. per NEWCASTLE.

*Monday, 28th January.*

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS presented the following message from His Majesty :

GEORGE R.

*HIS Majesty has given directions for laying before the House of Commons, copies of several papers which have been received from Mr. Chauvelin, late Minister Plenipotentiary from the Most Christian King, by His Majesty's Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs, and of the answers returned thereto ; and likewise copy of an order made by His Majesty in Council, and transmitted by His Majesty's commands to the said Mr. Chauvelin, in consequence of the accounts of the atrocious act recently perpetrated at Paris.*

*In the present situation of affairs, His Majesty thinks it indispensably necessary to make a further augmentation of his forces by sea and land ; and relies on the known affection and zeal of the House of Commons to enable His Majesty to take the most effectual measures in the present important conjuncture, for maintaining the security and rights of his own dominions ; for supporting his allies ; and for opposing views of aggrandizement and ambition on the part of France, which would be at all times dangerous to the general interests of Europe, but are peculiarly so, when connected with the propagation of principles which lead to the violation of the most sacred duties, and are utterly subversive of the peace and order of all civil society.*

G. R.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that he had but little to state to the House at the present moment, for he should reserve what he had to say on the subject of His Majesty's most gracious communication, until the time when the House should take that communication into consideration ; after which, the addition to our armaments would be regularly moved in the Committee of Supply. Indeed, he knew not what could now be said by any Member in that House, that would not be more properly reserved for a future day, to be fixed by the House for taking up the subject with all the gravity and importance that belonged to it. He should just only observe, that in all their former discussions, since the opening of the present ses-

sion, one circumstance alone—the influence which their deliberations might have upon an event then pending in a neighbouring kingdom—seemed to prevent the unanimity so much to be desired. The horrid and atrocious act since committed in that kingdom, he was sure, must make a deep and uniform impression, wherever sentiments of allegiance, of justice, of humanity, of religion, were felt or acknowledged. But however deeply impressed with these feelings, the House doubtless felt the propriety of suspending the declaration of their sentiments upon His Majesty's communication, until the time when they could declare them in a manner, befitting the magnitude of the occasion and the dignity of a British House of Commons. He concluded with moving that the message from His Majesty be taken into consideration on Thursday next.

Lord WYCOMBE said, he should trouble the House very shortly; he rose, indeed, to say, that he partly agreed with the right honourable gentleman, and partly to say that he was not sanguine enough to hope that what he should say would be very much attended to, at a time when men's passions were too strong for their reason. The event to which the right honourable gentleman alluded was an act from which the human mind must revolt, and of which history did not furnish an example. But that on which he wished particularly to express his opinion was, that, under all the circumstances of present difficulty, we were likely to be engaged in a war—not a war of necessity, of justice, or of principle, but a war against the liberty of mankind, and the progress and improvement of the human mind—a war of despotism against a people wishing to be free, and now endeavouring to regulate their internal affairs. He maintained there was no necessity for a war with France, nor could there be any justice in it, for on all occasions since the commencement of the disturbances upon the Continent, the French had manifested pure good will towards us, and expressed the most earnest disposition to explain, and to abstain from any thing that could be construed into an attack upon our allies. His Lordship wished the House to reflect on the consequence of our going to war at this period; the effect it would have upon our trade, and hinted that no man could possibly suppose, that by reflecting on the conduct of Ministers towards France, that they really intended to preserve for this country,

the blessings of peace ; that conclusion no man could arrive at, when he thought upon the supercilious manner in which we had rejected all their explanations, and the terms in which we had pretended to refuse, while in fact we did not refuse to treat with them.

Indeed there were many objections to our proceeding to hostilities, which Ministers did not seem to weigh with proper care. What was to become of the trade of this country ?—What was the condition of a sister kingdom ? These points were entirely neglected, while Ministers were pretending to praise the spirit of the people, and endeavouring to impose upon their understandings by creating false alarms. These things appeared to him to be worthy of much consideration, and perhaps he should, at a future period, call some attention to them. The right honourable gentleman might call them paradoxes, perhaps, and pretend to treat them with contempt ; he himself, indeed, had, some years ago, been a preacher of such paradoxes, when he had said, that he wished at all events to serve his country, but that he would not accept of a subordinate office in the State. His Lordship said, he did not wish to trouble the House with observations upon himself or his own character, nor did he often take part in a debate, but he would say, that he should support the character of an honest independent Member of that House, in defiance of any groundless allegations against him. That he looked for no situation in the State, subordinate or not subordinate ; and that he should remain a Member of it only while he remained independent. He said, it was with great pain he troubled the House upon this topic ; but he thought it was his duty to say thus much, because he knew that his conduct and his principles had been misrepresented and misunderstood.

Mr. Chancellor PITT observed, that he was not aware that any part of His Majesty's speech related to the conduct or the principles of the noble Lord who spoke last ; he should only say that it gave him great satisfaction to learn that the noble Lord intended to state all his sentiments on a future day. Whenever the noble Lord should be pleased to bring forward the topics to which he alluded, he thought he should be able to give him a distinct answer ; he should not, however, anticipate that debate, and therefore he should only say, that

whenever the noble Lord should be pleased to come forward with any observations pointed at him personally, he did not think that he should want ten days to prepare for giving him an answer.

Mr. DRAKE said, he rose in the cause of humanity, of the feelings of humanity, of philanthropy, and of religion, to second the motion.

Mr. FOX said, that the business before the House, and the circumstances alluded to in His Majesty's message, were of the greatest importance, and such as could not with propriety be decided upon but after mature deliberation. But he was not surprised that at this time the noble Lord should wish to give his opinion on the two most material points of it. The noble Lord had said what he felt on two points, differing in their nature from each other, but both necessary to be explained at the present moment. It was right that the noble Lord should convey his thoughts upon the situation of this country; it was natural that he should be anxious about the manner in which his sentiments were construed, and his expressions represented. With regard to that part of the communication from His Majesty, which related to the late detestable scene exhibited in a neighbouring country, he could not suppose there were two opinions in that House; he knew they were all ready to declare their abhorrence of that abominable proceeding. But although this was the unanimous feeling of the House upon that part of the subject, yet there were many who did not look so lightly on the blessings of peace (more particularly at this period) as to be ready to consent to a war, without knowing the foundation of it, and the reason why it was undertaken. There were those who could not consent to its being entered into at all, unless much more information were given on the necessity of it. He did not wish to anticipate what might remain to be said in explanation of this necessity; he wished that the whole might be reserved for a future day. The right honourable gentleman had said, that when any thing was brought forward against him, he should be ready to answer it, without requiring much time to consider of the answer. With respect to the abilities of the right honourable gentleman, he entertained no kind of doubt; that was a subject upon which he was sure he and the right honourable



gentleman concurred in opinion. But was the House to understand by the right honourable gentleman's saying that he was always ready to answer any charge against him the moment it was made, that when he made no answer at all, he had no answer to make ?

The motion was then put and agreed to, and the House adjourned till Thursday next.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS presented to the House, by His Majesty's command, the following Copies of Correspondence between M. Chauvelin and Lord Grenville :

No. I.

Translation of a Note delivered by Monsieur Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, May 12th 1792.

THE undersigned Minister Plenipotentiary of His Majesty the King of the French, is ordered by his Court to transmit to his Excellency Lord Grenville, Secretary of State to His Britannic Majesty for the department of Foreign Affairs, the following note :

The King of the French, in sending a Minister Plenipotentiary to London, has especially charged him to commence his mission by manifesting to the British Government the powerful reasons which have determined France to a war with the King of Hungary and Bohemia. He has thought that he owes this manifestation to the purity of the intentions which animate him, as well as to the laws of good neighbourhood, and to the value which he attaches to every thing which may maintain confidence and friendship between two empires, who have at this moment, more than ever, reasons for drawing near each other, and uniting themselves together.

Having become King of a free nation, after having sworn to support the constitution it has given herself, he cannot but deeply feel all the attacks designed against that constitution; and his probity alone would have induced him to prevent and combat them.

The King has seen a great conspiracy formed against France, the agents of this league concealing, under an insulting pity for him, the preparations of their designs; and His Majesty

has had the grief to count among them Frenchmen, whose fidelity appeared to be guaranteed by so many powerful motives and private ties.

The King has not been sparing of the means of persuasion to bring them back to their duty, and to break this threatening league, which supported and strengthened their guilty hopes. But the Emperor Leopold, the promoter and declared leader of this great conspiracy, and after his decease Francis, King of Hungary and Bohemia, have never sincerely answered any of the candid and reiterated demands of the King.

After being wearied by delays and vague answers, the impatience of the French increasing daily by new provocations, those Princes have successively avowed the coalition of the Powers against France. They never justified themselves for the part they had taken in it, or for that they were still taking. Far from shewing themselves disposed to dissolve it by their influence, they have sought to connect it with facts, which in the first place were foreign to it, and upon which France has never refused doing justice to the interested parties. And, as if the King of Hungary were desirous of consecrating the perpetuity of the attack he makes on the sovereignty of the French empire, he has declared that this coalition, equally injurious to the King and to the Nation, *could not cease until France should remove the serious causes which had given rise to it*, that is to say, so long as France, jealous of her independence, would not give up the smallest point of her new constitution.

Such an answer, preceded and supported by preparations most evidently hostile, and by an ill-concealed protection of the rebels, must have appeared to the National Assembly, to the King, and to all France, as a manifest aggression; for it is commencing war to announce that troops are assembled and called in all quarters, in order to constrain the inhabitants of a country to alter the form of government which they have freely chosen, and sworn to defend.

Such is the sense and, as it were, the substance, of all the evasive answers of the Emperor and King of Hungary's Ministers, to the simple and candid explanations which the King required of them.

Thus the King saw himself forced into a war, which was already declared against him; but, religiously faithful to the

principles of the constitution, whatever may finally be the fate of arms in this war, France rejects all ideas of aggrandizement. She will preserve her limits, her liberty, her constitution, her inalienable right of reforming herself, whenever she may think proper: she will never consent that, under any relation, foreign Powers should attempt to dictate, or even dare to nourish a hope of dictating laws to her. But this very pride, so natural and so just, is a sure pledge to all the Powers, from whom she shall have received no provocation, not only of her constantly pacific dispositions, but also of the respect which the French will know how to shew, at all times, for the laws, the customs, and all the forms of government of different nations.

The King, indeed, wishes it to be known, that he would publicly and severely disavow all those of his agents at foreign Courts in peace with France, who should dare to depart an instant from that respect, either by fomenting or favouring insurrections against the established order, or by interfering in any manner whatever in the interior policy of such States, under pretence of a profelytism, which, exercised in the dominions of friendly Powers, would be a real violation of the law of nations.

The King hopes that the British Government will see in this exposition the incontrovertible justice, and the necessity of the war, which the French nation maintains against the King of Hungary and Bohemia; and that he will moreover find in it that common principle of liberty and independence, of which they ought not to be less jealous than France. For England is free likewise, because she determined to be so; and assuredly she did not suffer other powers to attempt to compel her to alter the constitution she had adopted, to lend the smallest assistance to rebellious subjects, or to pretend to interfere, under any pretence, in her interior disputes.

Persuaded that His Britannic Majesty is not less ardently desirous than himself of seeing the good understanding and union between the two countries consolidated and strengthened, the King demands, that, conformably to the 4th article of the treaty of navigation and commerce of the 26th September 1786, His Britannic Majesty shall remind all his subjects of Great Britain and Ireland, and publish it in the accustomed manner, in those two kingdoms, and in the islands and countries de-

pendant upon them, an exprefs prohibition to exercife againſt France, or againſt the ſhips of France, any hoſtility, by cruizing on the ſeas, or to take out any patent, commiſſion, or letters of reprizals, from the different Princes or States who are or ſhall be at war with France; or to make uſe, in any manner, of ſuch patents or commiſſions.

The King requires beſides, that all the articles of the aforeſaid treaty, which relate to the caſe of one of the contracting powers being at war, and eſpecially the 3d, 16th, 24th, 39th, 40th, and 41ſt articles, ſhall be punctually obſerved and executed, in the ſame manner as His Maſteſty is determined to act on his part, reſpecting all the ſtipulations of this treaty.

London, 12 May 1792,  
4th Year of French Liberty.

The Miniſter Plenipotentiary of  
France,

CHAUVELIN.

## No. II.

Translation of a Note from Lord Grenville, to Monſieur Chauvelin, dated May 24th, 1792.

THE under-ſigned Secretary of State to the King has had the honour of laying before His Maſteſty the official note which Monſieur Chauvelin tranſmitted to him the 15th inſtant. He has orders to teſtify to that Miniſter how truly ſenſible His Maſteſty ever is to the proofs of friendship and confidence which he receives on the part of His Moſt Chriſtian Maſteſty, and with how much ſincerity he returns them by ſentiments perfectly reciprocal.

His Maſteſty could not learn without the deepeſt regret that a war has broken out between His Moſt Chriſtian Maſteſty and His Maſteſty the King of Hungary and Bohemia. This ſentiment is equally inſpired by his love for humanity, by the intereſt he takes in the maintaining the tranquillity of Europe, and

by his sincere wishes for the personal happiness of Their Most Christian and Apostolic Majesties, and for the prosperity of their dominions. In the present circumstances he thinks it right to abstain from entering into a discussion of the motives and the steps on each side which have brought on a rupture so afflicting to a sovereign, the neighbour and friend of the two belligerent parties.

Confining himself, therefore, to expressions of the wishes he will never cease to form for the speedy and permanent re-establishment of peace, he does not hesitate, however, to give to His Most Christian Majesty the direct and positive assurance of his readiness to fulfil in the most exact manner the stipulations of the treaty of navigation and commerce of which His Most Christian Majesty requires the execution.

Faithful to all his engagements, His Majesty will pay the strictest attention to the preservation of the good understanding which so happily subsists between him and His Most Christian Majesty ; expecting with confidence, that, animated with the same sentiments, His Most Christian Majesty will not fail to contribute to the same end, by causing, on his part, the rights of His Majesty and his allies to be respected, and by rigorously forbidding any step which might affect the friendship which His Majesty has ever desired to consolidate and perpetuate for the happiness of the two empires.

(Signed) GRENVILLE.

Whitehall, 24 May, 1792.

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### No. III.

Translation of a Note from Monsieur Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, May 24th, 1792.

THE under-signed Minister Plenipotentiary from the King of the French to His Britannic Majesty, has the honour to state to his Excellency Lord Grenville, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs,

That the Royal Proclamation published the 21st of this

month, and communicated to the two Houses of Parliament, contains some expressions which might, contrary to the intentions of the British Ministry, give weight to the false opinions which the enemies of France endeavour to circulate with respect to her intentions towards Great Britain.

If certain individuals of this country have established a correspondence abroad, tending to excite troubles therein, and if, as the Proclamation seems to insinuate, certain Frenchmen have come into their views, that is a proceeding wholly foreign to the French Nation, to the Legislative Body, to the King, and to his Ministers ; it is a proceeding of which they are entirely ignorant, which militates against every principle of justice, and which, whenever it became known, would be universally condemned in France. Independently of those principles of justice, from which a free people ought never to deviate, is it not evident, from a due consideration of the true interests of the French Nation, that she ought to desire the interior tranquillity, the continuance and the force of the Constitution of a country which she already looks upon as her naturally ?

Is not this the only reasonable wish, which a people can form, which sees so many efforts united against its liberty ? The Minister Plenipotentiary, deeply sensible of these truths, and of the maxims of universal morality upon which they are founded, had already represented them in an official note, which he transmitted to the British Ministry the 15th of this month, by the express orders of his Court ; and he thinks it his duty to repeat, on the present occasion, the important declarations which it contains :

“ Religiously faithful to the principles of its Constitution,  
“ whatever may be definitively the fortune of her arms in this  
“ war, France repels every idea of aggrandisement ; she  
“ wishes to preserve her own limits, her liberty, her Constitution, and her inalienable right of reforming herself, whenever she shall judge proper : she will never consent that foreign powers should in any shape dictate, or should dare to  
“ nourish a hope of dictating laws to her ; but this very pride,  
“ so natural and so just, is a pledge to all the powers from  
“ whom she shall have received no provocation, not only of  
“ her constantly pacific dispositions, but also of the respect

“ which the French will at all times know how to pay to the  
 “ laws, the usages, and all the forms of government of diffe-  
 “ rent people. The King also desires that it may be known,  
 “ that he would disavow, decidedly and severely, all those of  
 “ his agents in foreign Courts at peace with France, who  
 “ might dare to deviate a moment from this respect, either by  
 “ fomenting or by favouring revolts against the established or-  
 “ der, or by interfering in any manner whatever in the inter-  
 “ nal politics of those States, under pretext of making pro-  
 “ selytes, which, exercised towards friendly powers, would  
 “ be a real violation of the law of nations.

“ The King hopes that the British Government will see in  
 “ this exposition the incontrovertible justice, and the necessity  
 “ of the war, which the French Nation carries on against the  
 “ King of Hungary and Bohemia, and that it will further  
 “ find therein, that common principle of liberty and indepen-  
 “ dence, of which it ought not to be less jealous than France ;  
 “ for England also is free, because *she would* be so, and cer-  
 “ tainly *she* has not suffered that other powers should constrain  
 “ her to change the Constitution which *she* has adopted, that  
 “ they should lend the least assistance to her rebellious subjects,  
 “ nor that they should pretend to interfere, under any pretext,  
 “ in her internal discussions.”

The honour of France, her desire of preserving and aug-  
 menting a good understanding between the two countries, and  
 the necessity of clearing up every doubt as to her dispositions,  
 requiring that they should be as publicly known as possible,  
 the under-signed Minister Plenipotentiary requests that Lord  
 Grenville would communicate this official note to the two  
 Houses of Parliament, previous to their deliberating on the  
 Proclamation of His Britannic Majesty of the 21st of May.  
 He seizes this opportunity of renewing to his Excellency the  
 assurances of his high esteem and respect.

The Minister Plenipotentiary of France,

(Signed) F. CHAUVELIN.

London, May 24th, 1792,  
 Fourth Year of French Liberty.

## No. IV.

Translation of a Letter from Lord Grenville to Monsieur Chauvelin, May 25th, 1792.

Whitehall, 25th May, 1792.

I HAVE already had the honour, Sir, to acknowledge the receipt of the note which you addressed to me, dated yesterday.

Desiring, with ardour and sincerity, to maintain, in all the affairs that I may have the honour to treat with you, that harmony and cordiality which correspond with the intentions of the King, it is with regret that I find myself under the necessity of making to you the following observations on the subject of that paper :—I am persuaded that it was not at all your intention to deviate from the rules and forms established in this kingdom for the correspondence of the Ministers of foreign Courts with the King's Secretary of State for this department. But it was impossible for me not to remark that in your last note, the only question relates to a communication which you desire me to make to the two Houses of Parliament, before they deliberate upon an object which you appear to believe they were about to discuss. It is necessary for me to observe to you, Sir, that in my quality of Secretary of State to His Majesty, I cannot receive any communication from a foreign Minister, but in order to lay it before the King, and to receive His Majesty's commands thereupon; and that the deliberations of the two Houses of Parliament, as well as the communications which His Majesty shall be pleased to make to them, relative to the affairs of the kingdom, are objects absolutely foreign to all diplomatic correspondence, and upon which it is impossible for me to enter into any discussion whatever with the Ministers of other Courts.

This, Sir, is the only answer which it will be possible for me to return to the note in question; which, as well in its form as in its object, cannot be considered as a regular and official communication. I shall always feel the greatest pleasure in reporting to His Majesty the assurances which you may be authorised to give me for that purpose, of the friendly disposi-



tions of your Court ; and I desire you to accept the expression of the esteem and high regard with which I have the honour to be, &c.

GRENVILLE.

No. V.

Translation of a Letter from Monsieur Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, May 25th, 1792.

Portman Square, May 25th, 1792.

I HAVE this moment, my Lord, received the letter which you have done me the honour to write to me on the subject of the note which I sent you yesterday, the 24th instant. I have the honour to thank you for the obliging manner in which it is expressed. You have done justice to my intentions, in believing that I did not intend to depart from the established rules and forms of this kingdom.

I by no means thought, when I presented that note to you, that the demand contained in it ought not, as well as all others, to be laid before the King of Great Britain ; it was expressly in the intention of giving to His Majesty fresh assurances of deference and respect for the British Government, that I did myself the honour of making that last notification : and it being my desire to make this manifestation of the dispositions of the French Government as public as possible, I thought it best to beg you to communicate it to both Houses of Parliament.

In making this request, my Lord, I intended to obviate the false interpretations which might be occasioned in the two Houses by the article of the Proclamation, which is the subject of it ; I flattered myself by this means to contribute towards the maintenance of that harmony, and of that cordiality between the two States, of which I with joy remarked the expression in the assurance which you gave me, that it is no less desired by His Britannic Majesty than by the King of the French.

As to the rest, my Lord, any other form which it may suit you to adopt, and which may render very public the sentiments

of France, her true dispositions with regard to England, and the orders which I have received from the King of the French, and which I have communicated to you, will equally answer the wish of the French Government.

Please to accept the homage of the esteem, and of the high consideration with which I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) F. CHAUVELIN.

### No. VI.

Translation of a Note from Monsieur Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, received June 2d, 1792.

THE under-signed Minister Plenipotentiary from the King of the French to His Britannic Majesty has the honour to state to his Excellency Lord Grenville, Minister of State for Foreign Affairs, that the Royal Proclamation, published the 21st of this month, and communicated to the two Houses of Parliament, contains some expressions which might, contrary to the intentions of the British Ministry, give weight to the false opinions which the enemies of France endeavour to circulate with respect to her intentions towards Great Britain.

If certain individuals of this country have established a correspondence abroad, tending to excite troubles therein, and if, as the Proclamation seems to insinuate, certain Frenchmen have come into their views, that is a proceeding wholly foreign to the French Nation, to the Legislative Body, to the King, and to his Ministers ; it is a proceeding of which they are entirely ignorant, which militates against every principle of justice, and which, whenever it became known, would be universally condemned in France. Independently of those principles of justice, from which a free people ought never to deviate, is it not evident, from a due consideration of the true interests of the French Nation, that she ought to desire the interior tranquillity, the continuance and the force of the Constitution of a country which she already looks upon as her natural ally ? Is not this the only reasonable wish, which people can form, who sees so many efforts united against its liberty &

The Minister Plenipotentiary, deeply sensible of these truths, and of the maxims of universal morality upon which they are founded, had already represented them in an official note, which he transmitted to the British Ministry the 15th of this month, by the express orders of his Court; and he thinks it his duty to repeat, on the present occasion, the important declarations which it contains :

“ Religiously faithful to the principles of its Constitution,  
“ whatever may be definitively the fortune of her arms in this  
“ war, France repels every idea of aggrandisement; she  
“ wishes to preserve her own limits, her liberty, her Consti-  
“ tution, and her inalienable right of reforming herself, when-  
“ ever she shall judge proper: she will never consent that fo-  
“ reign powers should in any shape dictate; or should dare to  
“ nourish a hope of dictating laws to her; but this very pride,  
“ so natural and so just, is a pledge to all the powers from  
“ whom she shall have received no provocation, not only of  
“ her constantly pacific dispositions, but also of the respect  
“ which the French will at all times know how to pay to the  
“ laws, the usages, and all the forms of government of diffe-  
“ rent people. The King also desires that it may be known,  
“ that he would disavow, decidedly and severely, all those of  
“ his agents in foreign Courts at peace with France, who  
“ might dare to deviate a moment from this respect, either by  
“ fomenting or by favouring revolts against the established or-  
“ der, or by interfering in any manner whatever in the inter-  
“ nal politics of those States, under pretext of making pro-  
“ selytes, which, exercised towards friendly powers, would  
“ be a real violation of the law of nations.

“ The King hopes that the British Government will see in  
“ this exposition the incontrovertible justice, and the necessity  
“ of the war, which the French Nation carries on against the  
“ King of Hungary and Bohemia, and that it will further  
“ find therein, that common principle of liberty and indepen-  
“ dence, of which it ought not to be less jealous than France;  
“ for England also is free, because she *would* be so, and cer-  
“ tainly she has not suffered that other powers should constrain  
“ her to change the Constitution which she has adopted, that  
“ they should lend the least assistance to her rebellious subjects,

“ nor that they should pretend to interfere, under any pretext,  
“ in her internal discussions.”

The honour of France, her desire of preserving and augmenting a good understanding between the two countries, and the necessity of clearing up every doubt as to her dispositions, requiring that they should be as publicly known as possible, the under-signed Minister Plenipotentiary requests that Lord Grenville would obtain His Britannic Majesty's permission to communicate this official note to the two Houses of Parliament, previous to their deliberating on the Proclamation of the 21st of May.

He seizes this opportunity of renewing to his Excellency the assurances of his high esteem and respect.

The Minister Plenipotentiary of France,  
(Signed) F. CHAUVELIN.

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No. VII.

Translation of a Note from Monsieur Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, dated June 18th, 1792.

THE undersigned Minister Plenipotentiary of His Majesty the King of the French has transmitted to His Majesty the official note which Lord Grenville addressed to him on the 24th of May last, on the part of His Britannic Majesty, in answer to that which he had the honour to deliver to him on the 15th of the same month, together with the Royal proclamation published in consequence of it. He is directed to assure His Britannic Majesty of the due sense which the King entertains of the friendly dispositions, and of the sentiments of humanity, of justice, and of peace, which are so clearly manifested in that answer.

The King of the French observed with care all its expressions, and is happy in consequence to renew to the King of Great Britain the formal assurance that every thing which can interest the rights of His Britannic Majesty will continue to be the object of his most particular and most scrupulous attention.

He hastens at the same time to declare to him, conformably to the desire expressed in that answer, that the rights of all the allies of Great Britain, who shall not have provoked France by hostile measures, shall by him be no less religiously respected.

In making, or rather in renewing this declaration, the King of the French enjoys the double satisfaction of expressing the wish of a people, in whose eyes every war which is not rendered necessary by a due attention, to its defence is essentially unjust, and joining particularly in the wishes of His Britannic Majesty for the tranquillity of Europe, which would never be disturbed if France and England would unite in order to preserve it.

But this declaration of the King's, and the dispositions of His Britannic Majesty, authorize him to hope that he will be induced eagerly to employ his good offices with those allies to dissuade them from granting, directly or indirectly, any assistance to the enemies of France, and to inspire them with regard to its rights, that is to say, its independence, with those attentions which France is ready to manifest on every occasion for the rights of all powers who shall observe towards her the terms of a strict neutrality.

The steps taken by the Cabinet of Vienna amongst the different powers, and principally amongst the allies of His Britannic Majesty, in order to engage them in a quarrel which is foreign to them, are known to all Europe. If public report even were to be credited, its successes at the Court of Berlin prepare the way for others in the United Provinces. The threats held out to the different Members of the Germanic body to make them deviate from that wise neutrality which their political situation, and their dearest interests, prescribe to them; the arrangements taken with different Sovereigns of Italy to determine them to act hostilely against France; and lastly, the intrigues by which Russia has just been induced to arm against the Constitution of Poland; every thing points out fresh marks of a vast conspiracy against free states, which seems to threaten to precipitate Europe in universal war.

The consequences of such a conspiracy, formed by the concurrence of powers who have been so long rivals, will be easily felt by His Britannic Majesty: The balance of Europe, the

independence of the different powers, the general peace, every consideration which at all times has fixed the attention of the English Government, is at once exposed and threatened.

The King of the French presents these serious and important considerations to the solicitude and to the friendship of His Britannic Majesty. Strongly penetrated with the marks of interest and of affection which he has received from him; he invites him to seek, in his wisdom, in his situation, and in his influence, means compatible with the independence of the French nation, to stop, whilst it is still time, the progress of that confederacy, which equally threatens the peace, the liberty, the happiness of Europe, and above all to dissuade from all accession to this project those of his allies whom it may be wished to draw into it, or who may have been already drawn into it from fear, seduction, and different pretexts of the falsest as well as of the most odious policy.

The Minister Plenipotentiary of France.

(Signed) F. CHAUVELIN.

Portman Square,  
June 18th, 1792, the 4th  
Year of Liberty.

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### No. VIII.

Translation of a Note from Lord Grenville to Monsieur Chauvelin, July 8th, 1792.

THE undersigned Secretary of State to His Majesty has had the honour to lay before His Majesty the note which Monsieur Chauvelin sent him the 18th of June.

The King always receives with the same sensibility from His Most Christian Majesty the assurances of his friendship, and of his disposition to maintain that happy harmony which subsists between the two empires. His Majesty will never refuse to concur in the preservation or re-establishment of peace between the other powers of Europe, by such means as are proper to

produce that effect, and are compatible with his dignity, and with the principles which govern his conduct. But the same sentiments which have determined him not to take a part in the internal affairs of France, ought equally to induce him to respect the rights and the independence of other Sovereigns, and especially those of the allies; and His Majesty has thought that, in the existing circumstances of the war now begun, the intervention of his councils, or of his good offices, cannot be of use, unless they should be desired by all the parties interested.

Nothing then remains for the undersigned, but to repeat to Monsieur Chauvelin the assurances of those wishes which His Majesty forms for the return of tranquillity, of the interest which he will always take in the happiness of his Most Christian Majesty; and of the value which he attaches to his friendship, and to the confidence which he has shewn him.

Whitehall,  
8th July 1792.

(Signed) GRENVILLE.

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No. IX.

Translation of a Note from Monsieur Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, 19th Nov. 1792.

MONSIEUR Chauvelin has the honour to present his respects to Lord Grenville; and requests that he would, as soon as possible, grant him a moment's conversation, and that he would appoint for that purpose the hour and the place, either in town or country, at which it would be least inconvenient to him to meet him.

Portman Square,  
the 19th November, 1792.

## No. X.

Translation of a Note from Lord Grenville to Monsieur Chauvelin, Nov. 21st, 1792.

LORD Grenville presents his compliments to Monsieur Chauvelin. He received yesterday evening the note which Monsieur Chauvelin addressed to him, dated the 19th of this month : before he can answer it, he must, under the present circumstances, request Monsieur Chauvelin will be pleased to explain to him the object of the conference which he has desired.

Whitehall,  
November 21st, 1792.

## No. XI.

Translation of a Note from Monsieur Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, Nov. 22d, 1792.

MONSIEUR Chauvelin has the honour to present his compliments to Lord Grenville. He thought that the private conversation which he had the honour to propose to him a few days since, could not, in the present circumstances, without any inconveniency, but have produced advantageous effects ; if Lord Grenville thinks otherwise, and considers such an interview as useless at this moment, Monsieur Chauvelin will not insist upon it ; and will only regret that he has not been able to seize this opportunity of offering his respects to Lord Grenville, and of renewing to him assurances of his esteem.

Portman Square,  
the 22d November, 1792.

Lord Grenville.



## No. XII.

Translation of a Letter from Lord Grenville to Monsieur Chauvelin, Nov. 28th, 1792.

Whitehall, Nov. 28th, 1792.

SIR,

I could have wished that you had thought yourself enabled to satisfy the desire which I expressed to you, of knowing the object of the conference you demanded of me some days ago : but as, on reflecting on the situation of affairs, I have thought with you, that the private conversation you proposed to me may be useful under the existing circumstances, I will not refuse it.

I will beg of you to be so good as to come to the Office for Foreign Affairs to-morrow at noon, if that hour should be convenient to you.

In the mean time I renew to you the assurance of the distinguished regard with which I have the honour to be, &c.

GRENVILLE.

Monsieur Chauvelin.

## No. XIII.

Translation of a Note from Monsieur Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, Dec. 27th, 1792.

Portman Square, Dec. 27th, 1792,  
the first year of the Republic.

THE undersigned Minister Plenipotentiary of France has the honour to communicate to his Excellency Lord Grenville the instructions which he has received from the Executive Council of the French Republic, with orders to lay them before His Britannic Majesty's Secretary of State for the department of Foreign Affairs, in case he should believe that he could not sufficiently soon obtain an interview with that Minister.

The French Government, by continuing, since the recall of Lord Gower from Paris, to leave at London its Minister Plenipotentiary, conceived that it gave his Britannic Majesty an unequivocal proof of the desire it had to continue to live upon good terms with him, and to dispel those clouds which the events necessary and inherent to the internal regulations of France, appeared at that time to have occasioned. The intentions of the Executive Council of France, with regard to England, have not ceased to be the same; but it has not been able to see with indifference the public conduct which the British Ministry maintains at present towards France. It is with regret that it has remarked in this conduct, a character of ill will, to which it is yet unwilling to give credit. It has however felt, that its duty to the French nation required it no longer to leave it in a state of uncertainty, into which it had been thrown by several measures recently adopted by the British Government—an uncertainty which must be shared by the British nation, and which is equally unworthy of both countries.

The Executive Council of the French Republic has, in consequence, authorised the Minister of France at London, to demand with openness of the Ministers of His Britannic Majesty, if France ought to consider England as a neutral Power, or as an enemy; and it has especially charged him to obtain a definitive answer upon this point.

But, in asking from the Ministers of His Britannic Majesty a frank and open explanation as to their intentions with regard to France, the Executive Council is unwilling they should have the smallest remaining doubt as to the disposition of France towards England, and as to its desire of remaining in peace with her; it has even been desirous of answering beforehand all the reproaches which they may be tempted to make in justification of a rupture.

On reflecting what may be the reasons which may determine His Britannic Majesty to break with the French Republic, the Executive Council has been able to find no other than a false interpretation, which is, perhaps, given to the decree of the National Convention of the 19th of November. If a real alarm has been occasioned by this decree, it can have arisen only for want of understanding its true sense. The National Convention never meant that the French Republic should favour in-

rebellions, should espouse the quarrels of a few seditious persons, or, in a word, should endeavour to excite disturbances in any neutral or friendly country whatever. Such an idea would be rejected by all the French. It cannot be imputed to the National Convention without doing it injustice. This decree, then, is applicable only to those people, who, after having acquired their liberty by conquest, may have demanded the fraternity, the assistance of the Republic, by the solemn and unequivocal expression of the general will.

France ought and will respect, not only the independence of England, but even that of those of her allies, with whom she is not at war. The undersigned has therefore been charged formally to declare, that she will not attack Holland, so long as that Power shall, on its side, confine itself towards her within the bounds of an exact neutrality.

The British Government being thus set at its ease upon these two points, no pretence for the smallest difficulty could remain, except as to the question of the opening of the Scheldt, a question irrevocably decided by reason and by justice, of small importance in itself, and on which the opinion of England, and perhaps of Holland itself, is sufficiently known, to render it difficult seriously to make it the single subject of a war.—Should, however, the British Ministry avail itself of this last motive, as a cause of declaring war against France, would it not, in such case, be probable, that its secret intention must have been, at all events, to bring on a rupture; and that it made use, at the present moment, of the vainest of all pretences, to colour an unjust aggression, long ago determined upon?

On this unfortunate supposition, which the Executive Council rejects, the undersigned would be authorised forcibly to support the dignity of the French people, and to declare with firmness, that this free and powerful people will accept the war, and repel with indignation an aggression so manifestly unjust, and so little provoked on its part. When every explanation, calculated to demonstrate the purity of the intentions of France, when all peaceable and conciliatory measures shall have been exhausted by her, it is evident that all the weight, all the responsibility of the war, will fall sooner or later on those who shall have provoked it. It will, in fact, be nothing but a

war of the Administration alone against the French Republic ; and if this truth could for a moment appear doubtful, it would not perhaps be impossible for France speedily to convince of this a nation, which, in bestowing its confidence, has never renounced the exercise of its reason, or its respect for truth and justice.

Such are the instructions which the undersigned has received orders to communicate officially to his Excellency Lord Grenville ; inviting him, as well as the whole Council of His Britannic Majesty, to weigh, with the most serious attention, the declarations and the demands which they contain. It is evident that the French nation is desirous of maintaining peace with England ; she affords a proof of this, by lending herself frankly and openly to dissipate all the suspicions which so many different passions and prejudices are unceasingly at work to raise up against her ; but the more she shall have done to convince all Europe of the purity of her views, and of the justice of her intentions, the more will she have a right to expect no longer to be misunderstood.

The undersigned has orders to demand a written answer to the present note. He hopes that the Ministers of His Britannic Majesty will be brought back, by the explanations which it contains, to ideas more favourable to the re-union of the two countries, and that they will not have occasion, for the purpose of returning to them, to consider the terrible responsibility of a declaration of war, which will incontrovertibly be their own work, the consequences of which cannot be otherwise than fatal to the two countries, and to human nature in general, and in which a generous end free people cannot long consent to betray their own interests, by serving as an auxiliary and a reinforcement to a tyrannical coalition.

(Signed)

F. CHAUVELIN.

## No. XIV.

Translation of a Letter from Lord Grenville to Monsieur Chauvelin, dated Whitehall, December 31st, 1792.

Whitehall, December 31, 1792.

I HAVE received, Sir, from you a note, in which, styling yourself Minister Plenipotentiary of France, you communicate to me, as the King's Secretary of State, the instructions which you state to have yourself received from the Executive Council of the French Republic. You are not ignorant, that since the unhappy events of the 10th of August, the King has thought proper to suspend all official communication with France. You are yourself no otherwise accredited to the King, than in the name of his Most Christian Majesty. The proposition of receiving a Minister accredited by any other authority or power in France, would be a new question, which, whenever it should occur, the King would have the right to decide according to the interests of his subjects, his own dignity, and the regard which he owes to his allies, and to the general system of Europe. I am therefore to inform you, Sir, in express and formal terms, that I acknowledge you in no other public character than that of Minister from his Most Christian Majesty, and that consequently you cannot be admitted to treat with the King's Ministers, in the quality and under the form stated in your note.

But observing that you have entered into explanations of some of the circumstances which have given to England such strong grounds of uneasiness and jealousy, and that you speak of these explanations as being of a nature to bring our two countries nearer, I have been unwilling to convey to you the notification stated above, without, at the same time, explaining myself clearly and distinctly on the subject of what you have communicated to me, though under a form which is neither regular nor official.

Your explanations are confined to three points.

The first is that of the decree of the National Convention of the 19th November, in the expressions of which, all England saw the formal declaration of a design to extend universally the

new principles of Government adopted in France, and to encourage disorder and revolt in all countries, even in those which are neutral. If this interpretation, which you represent as injurious to the Convention, could admit of any doubt, it is but too well justified by the conduct of the Convention itself. And the application of these principles to the King's dominions has been shewn unequivocally, by the public reception given to the promoters of sedition in this country, and by the speeches made to them precisely at the time of this decree, and since on several different occasions.

Yet notwithstanding all these proofs, supported by other circumstances which are but too notorious, it would have been with pleasure that we should have seen here such explanations and such a conduct as would have satisfied the dignity and honour of England with respect to what has already passed; and would have offered a sufficient security in future for the maintenance of that respect towards the rights, the Government, and the tranquillity of neutral powers, which they have on every account the right to expect.

Neither this satisfaction, nor this security, is found in the terms of an explanation which still declares to the promoters of sedition in every country, what are the cases in which they may count beforehand on the support and succour of France; and which reserves to that country the right of mixing herself in our internal affairs, whenever she shall judge it proper, and on principles incompatible with the political institutions of all the countries of Europe. No one can avoid perceiving how much a declaration like this is calculated to encourage disorder and revolt in every country. No one can be ignorant how contrary it is to the respect which is reciprocally due from independent nations, nor how repugnant to those principles which the King has followed on his part, by abstaining at all times from any interference whatever in the internal affairs of France; and this contrast is alone sufficient to shew, not only that England cannot consider such an explanation as satisfactory, but that she must look upon it as a fresh avowal of those dispositions which she sees with so just an uneasiness and jealousy.

I proceed to the two other points of your explanation, which concern the general disposition of France with regard to the al-

lies of Great Britain, and the conduct of the Convention and its officers relative to the Scheldt. The declaration which you there make, that France will not attack Holland so long as that power shall observe an exact neutrality, is conceived nearly in the same terms with that which you was charged to make in the name of His Most Christian Majesty, in the month of June last. Since that first declaration was made, an officer, stating himself to be employed in the service of France, has openly violated both the territory and the neutrality of the Republic, in going up the Scheldt to attack the citadel of Antwerp, notwithstanding the determination of the Government not to grant this passage, and the formal protest by which they opposed it. Since the same declaration was made, the Convention has thought itself authorised to annul the rights of the Republic exercised within the limits of its own territory, and enjoyed by virtue of the same treaties by which her independence is secured; and at the very moment when, under the name of an amicable explanation, you renew to me in the same terms the promise of respecting the independence and the rights of England and her allies, you announce to me, that those in whose name you speak intend to maintain these open and injurious aggressions.

It is not, certainly, on such a declaration as this that any reliance can be placed for the continuance of public tranquillity.

But I am unwilling to leave, without a more particular reply, what you say on the subject of the Scheldt. If it were true that this question is in itself of little importance, this would only serve to prove more clearly, that it was brought forward only for the purpose of insulting the allies of England, by the infraction of their neutrality, and by the violation of their rights, which the faith of treaties obliges us to maintain. But you cannot be ignorant, that here the utmost importance is attached to those principles which France wishes to establish by this proceeding, and to those consequences which would naturally result from them, and that not only those principles and those consequences will never be admitted by England, but that she is, and ever will be, ready to oppose them with all her force.

France can have no right to annul the stipulations relative to the Scheldt, unless she have also the right to set aside equally all the other treaties between all the powers of Europe, and all the other rights of England, or of her allies. She can even have no pretence to interfere in the question of opening the Scheldt, unless she were the Sovereign of the Low Countries, or had the right to dictate laws to all Europe.

England never will consent that France shall arrogate the power of annulling at her pleasure, and under the pretence of a pretended natural right, of which she makes herself the only Judge, the political system of Europe, established by solemn treaties, and guaranteed by the consent of all the powers.— This Government, adhering to the maxims which it has followed for more than a century, will also never see with indifference, that France shall make herself, either directly or indirectly, Sovereign of the Low Countries, or general arbitress of the rights and liberties of Europe. If France is really desirous of maintaining friendship and peace with England, she must shew herself disposed to renounce her views of aggression, and aggrandizement, and to confine herself within her own territory, without insulting other Governments, without disturbing their tranquillity, without violating their rights.

With respect to that character of ill-will which is endeavoured to be found in the conduct of England towards France, I cannot discuss it, because you speak of it in general terms only, without alledging a single fact. All Europe has seen the justice and the generosity which have characterised the conduct of the King. His Majesty has always been desirous of peace: He desires it still, but such as may be real and solid, and consistent with the interests and dignity of his own dominions, and with the general security of Europe.

On the rest of your paper, I say nothing. As to what relates to me and my colleagues, the King's Ministers owe to His Majesty the account of their conduct, and I have no answer to give to you on this subject, any more than on that of the appeal which you propose to make to the English nation. This nation, according to that constitution by which its liberty and its prosperity are secured, and which it will always be able to defend against every attack, direct or indirect, will never have with foreign powers connection or correspondence,



except through the organ of its King; of a King whom it loves and reveres, and who has never for an instant separated his rights, his interests, and his happiness, from the rights, the interests, and the happiness of his people.

I have the honour to be, &c.

GRENVILLE.

No. XV.

Translation of a Note from Monsieur Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, dated 7th of January, 1793. (Original returned.)

THE undersigned Minister Plenipotentiary from the French Republic has transmitted to the Executive Council the answer which his Excellency Lord Grenville has addressed to him on his note of the 27th December. He has thought it his duty not to wait for the instructions which will be the necessary result of it, in order to transmit to that Minister the new orders which he has received from the Executive Council. The declaration which Lord Grenville has made to him, that his Britannic Majesty did not acknowledge him as Minister Plenipotentiary from the French Republic, has not appeared to him as if it ought to prevent him. This declaration cannot in any respect alter or destroy the quality of delegate from the French Government, with which the undersigned is evidently invested, or hinder him, in such decisive circumstances, from addressing to the Ministers of his Britannic Majesty, in the name of the French People, of which he is the organ, the following note :

The Executive Council of the French Republic has been informed that the British Parliament is about to pass a law relative to foreigners, the rigorous provisions of which will subject them to measures the more arbitrary, as the Secretaries of State of His Britannic Majesty will have the liberty of restraining or extending them, according to their views and their pleasure. The Executive Council, knowing the religious fidelity of the English People in fulfilling their engagements, could not but suppose that the French would be expressly ex-

cepted from this law. The treaty of navigation and of commerce, concluded in 1786 between the States, ought formally to secure them from it. This treaty stipulates,

Article 4.

“ The subjects and inhabitants of the respective dominions  
 “ of the two Sovereigns shall have liberty to come and go  
 “ freely and securely, without licence or passport, general or  
 “ special, by land or by sea, and to return from thence, to re-  
 “ main there, or to pass through the same, and therein to buy  
 “ and purchase, as they please, all things necessary for their  
 “ subsistence and use, and they shall mutually be treated with  
 “ all kindness and favour. Provided however, &c. &c.”

But instead of finding in the bill proposed a just exception in favour of France, the Executive Council has been convinced, by positive declarations made in the two Houses of Parliament, by Ministerial explanations and interpretations, that this project of a law, under a general term of designation, was principally directed against the French.

When the British Ministry has proposed a law which would so expressly violate the treaty of commerce, when they have openly announced their intention of putting it into execution against the French alone, their first care must, no doubt, have been to attempt to cover this extraordinary measure with an appearance of necessity, and to prepare beforehand a justification, sooner or later necessary, by loading the French Nation with reproaches; by representing it to the English People as an enemy of its Constitution; by accusing it, without being able to furnish any proof, and in the most injurious terms, with having sought to foment troubles in England. The Executive Council has already repelled with indignation such suspicions. If some men, cast out from the bosom of France, have spread themselves in Great Britain with the criminal intention of agitating the people, of leading them to revolt, has not England laws to protect the public order? Could she not punish them? The Republic would assuredly not have interposed in their favour.—Such men are not Frenchmen.

Reproaches so little founded, imputations so insidious, will with difficulty succeed in justifying in the eyes of Europe a conduct, the comparison of which with that constantly held by

France towards Great Britain will suffice to demonstrate its injustice and malevolence. The French Nation, become free, has not only not ceased to express in all forms its desire to strengthen its connection with the English People, but it has realised this desire with all its power, by receiving as allies, as brothers, all the individuals of the English Nation. In the midst of the combats of liberty and of despotism, in the midst of the most violent agitations, it has honoured itself by a religious respect for all foreigners residing within it, and particularly for the English, whatever might be their opinions, their conduct, and their connections with the enemies of liberty; every where they have been assisted, succoured with every kind of benevolence and favour; and it would be as the reward for this generous conduct that the French would find themselves perhaps alone subjected to an Act of Parliament, which would grant to the English Government the most arbitrary latitude of authority against foreigners, which would subject them to the taking *licences or passports for coming, going, and remaining in England; which would allow the Secretaries of State to subject them without reasons, and on a mere suspicion, to the most odious forms, to fix a circuit, the bounds of which they could not pass, and even to cast them out of the territory of Great Britain at their pleasure.*

It is evident, that all these clauses are contrary to the letter of the treaty of commerce, the fourth article of which extends to all Frenchmen without distinction; and it is too much to be feared, that in consequence of the determination which His Britannic Majesty has thought it right to take, of breaking off all communication between the governments of the two countries, even the French Merchants may find themselves frequently unable to avail themselves of the exception which the bill has made in favour of those who "*shall prove that they came to England for affairs of commerce.*"

It is thus that the British Government has first chosen to break a treaty to which England owes a great part of its actual prosperity, burthensome to France, wrested by address and ability from the unskilfulness or from the corruption of the agents of a government it has destroyed; a treaty which it has, however, never ceased to observe religiously; and it is at the very moment when France is accused in the British Parliament of violating

treaties, that the public conduct of the two governments offers a contrast so proper to justify the retorting the accusation.

All the powers of Europe would have a right, doubtless, to complain of the hardship of this bill, if ever it obtained the force of law; but it is France especially, the inhabitants of which, secured from its penalties by a solemn treaty, appear nevertheless to be exclusively menaced by them; it is France that has the right to pretend to a more speedy and more particular satisfaction.

The executive Council might immediately have accepted the rupture of the treaty which the English Government seems to have held out to it; but it was unwilling to precipitate any of its measures; and it has chosen, before it makes known its definite resolution, to afford the British Ministry the opportunity of a frank and candid explanation. The undersigned has received orders, in consequence, to demand of Lord Grenville to inform him by a speedy, clear, and categorical answer, whether under the general denomination of foreigners in the bill on which the Houses are occupied, the Government of Great Britain means likewise to include the French.

(Signed)

CHAUVELIN.

Portman Square,

7th January 1793.

Second Year of the French Republic.

## No. XVI.

Translation of a Note from Lord Grenville to Monsieur Chauvelin, Jan. 7th, 1793.

AFTER the formal notification which the undersigned has already had the honour of making to Monsieur Chauvelin, he finds himself obliged to send back to him the inclosed paper, which he received from him this morning, and which he cannot but consider as being totally inadmissible, Monsieur Chauvelin assuming therein a character which is not acknowledged.

(Signed)

GRENVILLE.

Whitehall,

January 7th, 1793.

## No. XVII.

Translation of a Letter from Monsieur Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, dated 7th January, 1793, received 9th.

Portman Square, 7th January, 1793,  
2d year of the French Republic.

My Lord,

THE King of England has prohibited, by a proclamation of the 15th November, the exportation of grain and flour. Several vessels lawfully freighted, and ready to depart for France, the Government whereof had ordered considerable purchases of those commodities in the ports of England, have been stopped, notwithstanding the law which enacts that the ports shall not be shut till fifteen days after the date of the proclamation; and the British Ministry have themselves acknowledged the irregularity of some of their measures, by applying to Parliament for an act of indemnity. However, the French Government, relying at that time on the good dispositions of the British Ministry, beheld in those measures of vigour only the effect of the foresight and wisdom of the English Administration, and did not think it necessary to remonstrate.

Another proclamation, which soon followed the first, excepted all foreign wheat from the prohibition of exportation; it was guaranteeing to all Europe the security of transports, by removing, in an authentic and solemn manner, all the doubts to which the first proclamation might have given rise; it was insuring to the English commerce a considerable repository; it was above all distinguishing the ports of Great Britain as a sacred asylum for such vessels laden with grain, and destined for France, as, for their convenience, or by necessity, might be in the case of stopping in their course.

Four weeks after that declaration, some vessels laden with foreign grain, on account of France, were stopped in the English ports; and when the merchants who were commissioned made their claims, they were coldly answered, that it was by order of Government.

France, my Lord, might still have persuaded herself that some recent and unexpected information upon the state of pro-

vitions in Great Britain had obliged Administration to ~~take~~ such extraordinary measures ; but the English Government itself took care to prove to Europe that it had no other motive than an hostile partiality against France, if it is true that the Custom Houses received orders to permit the exportation of foreign wheat to all ports, except those of France.

This fact, my Lord, has been attested to me by respectable authorities ; and however accumulated may be the marks of malevolence and jealousy which France has seen for some time in the conduct of the British Cabinet, I still harbour doubts of it. I should, the first moment of my knowing it, have waited upon you, my Lord, to be assured from yourself of its certainty, or of its falsehood, if the determination taken by His Britannic Majesty, in the present circumstances, to break off all communication between the Governments of the two countries, had not rendered friendly and open steps the more difficult, in proportion as they became the more necessary.

But I considered, my Lord, that when the question of war or peace arose between two powerful Nations, that which manifested the desire of attending to all explanations, that which strove the longest to preserve the last link of union and friendship, was the only one which appeared truly worthy, and truly great. I beseech you, my Lord, in the name of public faith, in the name of justice and of humanity, to explain to me facts which I will not characterise, and which the French nation would take for granted by your silence only, or by the refusal of an answer.

Think, my Lord, that in the bosom of peace, far from all appearance of war, the English Government has profited of the good faith of the merchants of Europe, and of the security of a neighbouring and friendly nation, to bring into its ports those commodities of which it supposed or knew the want in that country, if now that same Ministry should take advantage of the first hostile measures, which they had either taken themselves, or provoked, to detain such commodities, in the hope, perhaps, that, in the midst of the agitations of that country, it would suffice, to excite the fear of want, to create it ; they would only obtain, as the reward of such an act of perfidy, even by the success of their enterprize, the shame of having employed means, which even in the midst of a terrible war, an enlightened and

generous nation must abhor, and of having sunk the credit of the English commerce, by violating the sacred asylum of its markets.

I have the honour, &c.

F. CHAUVELIN.

No. XVIII.

Translation of a Letter from Lord Grenville to Monsieur Chauvelin, 9th January, 1793.

At Whitehall, the 9th January, 1793.

IT was not till to-day, Sir, that I received your letter of the 7th of this month, relative to certain measures taken here with respect to the exportation of grain.

In the private conversation which we had the 29th of November, in consequence of your desire, I informed you that the King's Ministers would not decline receiving non-official communications, which, without deciding the question either of the acknowledgement of the new Government in France, or of receiving a Minister accredited by her, might offer the means of removing the misunderstanding which already manifested itself between the two countries.

It has been thought preferable in France to bring forward difficulties of form; and the first communication which I received from you, after that communication, was that of the note of the 27th December, to which I have already answered. I do not know in what capacity you address me the letter which I have just received; but in every case, it would be necessary to know the resolutions which shall have been taken in France, in consequence of what has already passed, before I can enter into any new explanations, especially with respect to measures founded in a great degree on those motives of jealousy and uneasiness which I have already detailed to you.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

GRENVILLE.

## No. XIX.

Translation of a Note from Monsieur Chauvelin. to Lord Grenville, 11th Jan. 1793 ; received 12th.

THE undersigned Minister Plenipotentiary of the French Republic has given an account to the Executive Council, of the form in which Lord Grenville has been authorized to reject the explanation which has been offered him in the name and on behalf of the Executive Council, on the subject of the law relative to foreigners. The undersigned, until he has fresh instructions from the Council, thinks it his duty not to delay to conform himself to those which he has already received, in declaring to Lord Grenville, that the French Republic cannot but regard the conduct of the English Government as a manifest infraction of the treaty of commerce concluded between the two Powers, and that consequently she ceases to consider herself as bound by that treaty, and that she regards it from this moment as broken and annulled.

(Signed) F. CHAUVELIN.

Portman Square, 11th Jan. 1793,  
the second year of the French Republic.

## No. XX.

Translation of a Note from Mr. Aust to Monsieur Chauvelin,  
13th January, 1793.

MR. Aust is charged to send back to Monsieur Chauvelin the inclosed paper, received yesterday at the Office for Foreign Affairs.

Whitehall,  
13th January, 1793.



## No. XXI.

Translation of a Letter from Monsieur Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, Jan. 12th, 1793.

My Lord,

I HAVE this instant received a messenger from France, who has brought me an answer to your letter of the 31st. It appears to me, that a conversation with you would be the most suitable form of communicating this answer to you; I have the honour to beg, my Lord, that you will grant it me as soon as possible. As I shall not attach any importance to the form of this private conversation, I cannot imagine, especially after your last letter of the 9th, you will see any difficulty in consenting to it.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) CHAUVELIN.

Portman Square, 12th January, 1793,  
the second year of the Republic.

## No. XXII.

Translation of a Letter from Lord Grenville to Monsieur Chauvelin, Jan. 13th, 1793.

Whitehall, 13th January, 1793,  
Half past one, P. M.

CONFORMABLY with what I have already intimated to you, Sir, I have the honour to inform you, that I shall make no difficulty to receive from you a non-official communication in answer to my letter of the 31st December: but I cannot avoid, under circumstances so critical, to beg that you will put in writing what you have to communicate to me, in order that I may be certain of not being under any mistake in the account which it will be my duty to give of this particular communi-

cation. I will therefore beg of you to come to the office for Foreign Affairs as soon as it may be convenient to you.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed) **GRENVILLE.**

Monsieur Chauvelin.

No. XXIII.

Translation of a Letter from Monsieur Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, dated 13th Jan. 1793.

Portman Square, 13th January,  
the second year of the Republic.

My Lord,

THE communication which I had the honour to propose to make to you, is already committed to writing. I shall immediately repair to your Office to carry it to you.

I have the honour, &c.

**F. CHAUVELIN.**

Lord Grenville.

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No. XXIV.

Translation of a Paper delivered by Monsieur Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, January 13, 1793.

Copy of the Paper addressed by Monsieur le Brun to Monsieur Chauvelin, the 8th January, to be communicated to Lord Grenville.

THE provisional Executive Council of the French Republic, previous to their answering in a more particular manner each of the heads comprized in the note which has been

remitted to them on the part of the Ministry of His Britannic Majesty, will begin by renewing to the said Ministry the most express assurances of their sincere desire of preserving peace and harmony between France and England.

The sentiments of the French nation towards the English have been manifested during the whole course of the Revolution in so constant, so unanimous a Manner, that there cannot remain the smallest doubt of the esteem which it has vowed them, and of its desire of having them for friends. It is therefore with the greatest repugnancy the Republic would see herself forced to a rupture, much more contrary to her own inclination than to her interest. Before we come to such an unpleasant extremity, explanations are necessary; and the matter is of so high an importance, that the Executive Council did not think it proper to trust it to the ever-unacknowledged Ministry of a secret agent; hence they have deemed it to be expedient in all points to charge Citizen Chauvelin with it, though he be no otherwise acknowledged before His Britannic Majesty, than on the late King's account.

The opinion of the Executive Council was justified on this occasion, by the manner in which our negotiations were at the same time transacted in Spain, where Citizen Bourgoing was exactly in the same situation as Citizen Chauvelin at London; yet this did not prevent the Ministers of His Catholic Majesty from treating with him for a convention of neutrality, the declaration of which is to be exchanged at Paris, between the Minister for Foreign Affairs, and the Spanish Chargé d'Affaires. We will even add, that the Prime Minister of His Catholic Majesty, in writing officially on this subject to Citizen Bourgoing, did not forget to give him his title of Minister Plenipotentiary from France. The example of a power of the first order, such as Spain, induced the Executive Council to hope to find the same facility at London. However, the Executive Council freely own, that this demand of negotiations has not all the rigour of diplomatic form, and that Citizen Chauvelin is not regularly enough authorized. In order to remove this obstacle entirely, to discard every reproach of having stopped, by the mere want of formality, a negotiation, on the success of which the tranquillity of two great nations is depending, they have taken the resolution of sending letters of

eredence to Citizen Chauvelin, which would furnish him with the means of treating in all the severity of diplomatic forms.

Now, to come to the three points which can alone make an object of difficulty at the Court of London, the Executive Council observe, respecting the first, which is the decree of the 19th of November, that we have not been properly understood by the Ministry of His Britannic Majesty, when they accuse us of having given an explanation *which announces to the seditious of all nations what are the Cases in which they may previously count on the support and assistance of France.* Nothing could be more foreign than this reproach to the sentiments of the National Convention, and to the explanation we have given of them; and we did not think that it were possible we should be charged with the open design of favouring *the seditious*, at the very moment when we declare, that it would be *wronging the National Convention if they were charged with the project of protecting insurrections, and with the Commotions that may break out in any corner of a State, of joining the ringleaders, and of thus making the cause of a few private individuals that of the French nation.*

We have said, and we desire to repeat it, that the decree of the 19th of November could not have any application, unless to the *single case* in which *the general will* of a nation, clearly and unequivocally expressed, should call the French Nation to its assistance and fraternity. Sedition can certainly never be construed into *the general will*. These two ideas mutually repel each other, since a sedition is not and cannot be any other than the movement of a small number against the nation at large; and this movement would cease to be seditious, provided all the members of a society should at once rise, either to correct their government, or to change its form *in toto*, or for any other object.

The Dutch were assuredly not seditious, when they formed the generous resolution of shaking off the yoke of Spain; and when the general will of that nation called for the assistance of France, it was not reputed a crime in Henry the Fourth, or in Elizabeth of England, to have listened to them. The knowledge of *the general will* is the only basis of the transactions of nations with each other; and we can only treat

with any government whatever on this principle, That such a government *is deemed the organ of the general will of the nation governed.*

Thus, when by this natural interpretation the decree of the 19th of November is reduced to what it truly implies, it will be found, that it announces nothing more than an act of the general will, and that beyond any doubt, and so effectually founded in right, that it was scarcely worth the trouble to express it. On this account, the Executive Council thinks that the evidence of this right might perhaps have been dispensed with by the National Convention, and did not deserve to be made the object of a particular decree. But with the interpretation which precedes it, it cannot give uneasiness to any nation whatever.

It appears that the Ministers of His Britannic Majesty have nothing to object to the declaration relative to Holland, since the single observation made by them on that subject belongs to the discussion of the Scheldt. It is this last point, therefore, to which we are confined.

We repeat it, this question is in itself of little moment.—The Ministers of Great Britain conclude that *it only serves to prove more clearly, that it was brought forward merely for the purpose of insulting the allies of England, &c.* We shall reply with much less warmth and prejudice, that this question is absolutely indifferent to England; that it is of little importance to Holland; but that it is extremely important to the Belgians. That it is indifferent to England it is not necessary to prove; and its trivial import to Holland is evinced by this fact, that the productions of the Belgians pass equally by the canals which terminate at Ostend. Its great importance to the Belgians is proved by the numerous advantages the Port of Antwerp presents to them. 'Tis therefore on account of this importance, 'tis to restore to the Belgians the enjoyment of so precious a right, and not to offend any one, that France has declared herself ready to support them in the exercise of so legitimate a right.

But is France authorised to break the stipulations which are opposed to the liberty of the Scheldt? If the rights of nature and those of nations are consulted, not France alone, all the

nations of Europe are authorised to do it — there can be no doubt of it.

If we consult public law, we shall say that it ought to be nothing but the application of the principles of the general rights of nations to the particular circumstances in which nations are placed with regard to each other ; insomuch that every particular treaty repugnant to such principles can only be regarded as the work of violence. We moreover add, in relation to the Scheldt, that this treaty was concluded without the participation of the Belgians. The Emperor, to secure the possession of the Low Countries, sacrificed, without scruple, the most inviolable of rights. Master of those fine provinces, he governed them, as Europe has seen, with the rod of absolute despotism, respected only those of their privileges which it imported him to preserve, and destroyed or perpetually struggled against the rest. France enters into war with the House of Austria, expels it from the Low Countries, and calls back to freedom those people whom the Court of Vienna had devoted to slavery ; their chains are broken ; they re-enter into all the rights which the House of Austria had taken away from them. How can that which they possessed with respect to the Scheldt be excepted, particularly when that right is only of importance to those who are deprived of it ? For what remains, France has too good a political creed to be afraid to avow the principles of it. The Executive Council declares, not with a view of yielding to some expressions of threatening language, but solely to render homage to truth, that the French Republic does not intend to erect itself into an universal arbitrator of the treaties which bind nations. She will know how to respect other governments, as she will take care to make her own respected. She does not wish to impose laws upon any one, and will not suffer any one to impose laws upon her. She has renounced, and again renounces, every conquest ; and her occupation of the Low Countries shall only continue during the war, and the time which may be necessary to the Belgians to insure and consolidate their liberty ; after which let them be independent and happy, France will find her recompence in their felicity.

When that nation shall be found in the full enjoyment of liberty, when its general will can lawfully declare itself with-

out shackles, then if England and Holland still attach some importance to the opening of the Scheldt, they may put the affair into a direct negociation with Belgia. If the Belgians, by any motive whatever, consent to deprive themselves of the navigation of the Scheldt, France will not oppose it; she will know how to respect their independence, even in their errors.

After so frank a declaration, which manifests such a sincere desire of peace, His Britannic Majesty's Ministers ought not to have any doubts with regard to the intentions of France. If her explanations appear insufficient, and if we are still obliged to hear a haughty language; if hostile preparations are continued in the English ports; after having exhausted every means to preserve peace, we will prepare for war, with a sense of the justice of our cause, and of our efforts to avoid this extremity: we will fight the English, whom we esteem, with regret, but we will fight them without fear.

A copy conformable to the original.

(Signed) F. CHAUVELIN.

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### No. XXV.

Translation of a Letter from Lord Grenville to Monsieur Chauvelin, January 18th, 1793.

Whitehall, January 18th, 1793.

I HAVE examined, Sir, with the greatest attention, the paper which you delivered to me on the 13th of this month. I cannot conceal from you that I have found nothing satisfactory in the result of that note. The explanations it contains are confined nearly to the same points to which I have already given a detailed answer. The declaration of an intention to interfere in the internal affairs of other countries is there renewed. No mention is made either of disavowal or reparation for the offensive measures stated in my letter to you of the 31st December. And the claim is still reserved of a right to annul treaties, and to violate the rights of our allies; there being only offered on this subject an illusory negociation, which

is referred, as well as the evacuation of the Low Countries by the French armies, to the indefinite period, not only of the conclusion of the war, but also of the consolidation of what is called the liberty of the Belgic people.

It is added, that if these explanations should appear to us unsatisfactory ; if you are again obliged to hear the language of haughtiness ; if hostile preparations are continued in the ports of England, after having exhausted every thing which could lead to peace, you will dispose yourselves to war.

If this notification, or that which related to the treaty of commerce, had been made to me in a regular and official form, I should have found myself obliged to answer, that a threat of declaring war against England, because she thinks proper to augment her forces, as well as a declaration of breaking a solemn treaty, because England has adopted, for her own security, precautions of the same nature as those which are already established in France, could neither of them be considered in any other light than that of new offences, which, while they subsisted, would preclude all negotiation.

In this form of unofficial communication, I feel that it may still be allowed me to tell you, without haughtiness, but also without disguise, that these explanations are not judged satisfactory, and that all the reasons which have occasioned our preparations still subsist. I have already made these reasons known to you by my letter of the 31st December, in which I have stated, in precise terms, what dispositions could alone contribute to the maintenance of peace and good understanding. I do not see that it can be useful towards the object of conciliation to continue to discuss with you, in this form, a few separate points, on which I have already made known to you our sentiments. If you had any explanations to give me in the same form, embracing all the objects which I mentioned to you in my letter of the 31st December, and all the circumstances of the present crisis with respect to England, to its allies, and to the general system of Europe, I should still willingly lend myself to it.

I feel, however, that in answer to what you say on the subject of our preparations, I ought to inform you, in the most express terms, that, under the existing circumstances, all those measures will be persisted in here which shall be judged expe-



dient for enabling us to protect the security, the tranquillity, and the rights of this country, to support those of our allies, and to oppose a barrier to views of ambition and aggrandizement always dangerous to the rest of Europe; but which become much more so when they are supported by the propagation of principles destructive of all order and society.

I have the honour to be, Sir,

Your most obedient

humble Servant,

GRENVILLE.

No. XXVI.

Translation of a Letter from Monsieur Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, dated 17th January 1793.

Portman Square, 17th January, 1793.  
2d year of the French Republic.

My Lord,

I HAVE the honour of addressing myself to you, to beg of you to grant me an interview. I shall proceed to explain the motives of this request, and you will judge them to be such as will not admit of delay. I shall first desire of you, my Lord, security for my communications with the French Government. Whatever may be the character which you acknowledge me to possess, you have at least never doubted of the authenticity of the declarations which I have transmitted to you in the name of the French nation. I will therefore propose to you, my Lord, either absolutely to refuse hearing me, or to give orders for my couriers to be respected, and the secrecy of my letters, as well of those sent as received, to be observed.

I will then, my Lord, require to be informed whether His Britannic Majesty will receive my letters of credence, and if he be satisfied with the declarations contained in the paper which I had the honour of transmitting to your Lordship last Sunday. I have not only received fresh orders from the Exe-

cutive Council of France, to insist upon a speedy and definitive answer ; but there is yet another reason which urgently presses for the decision of His Britannic Majesty.—I have learnt this day, that the law relating to foreigners obliges them to make their declaration within ten days after the 10th of January ; and in case of any foreigner, who is amenable to this law, neglecting or refusing to make such declaration, the Magistrates of this country would be authorized not only to require him to do so, but even to imprison him. I know, my Lord, and all those who understand the rights of nations know it also, that I cannot be implicated in this law : the avowed and acknowledged organ of a Government which executes laws to which twenty-five million of men have submitted themselves, my person is, and ought to be, sacred ; and even under my diplomatic character, my Lord, I could not be ranked among the general common class of foreigners, until His Britannic Majesty should have definitively rejected the letters of credence which he knows I have received for him. But had I been implicated in this law, I owe to the Government of a free and powerful nation, which I represent, this declaration, that it would be impossible for me to submit to it ; and that all the persecutions which it might please His Britannic Majesty to make me endure, would fall upon the French nation, in whose cause and for whose sake it would be my glory to suffer.

After this candid declaration, my Lord, thinking myself intitled to an equal sincerity on your side, I will desire of you, in the conversation which I solicit, to inform me, what is the conduct which His Britannic Majesty's Ministers mean to hold with respect to me, and with respect to the persons who compose my household, in consequence of the law against foreigners :

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

F. CHAUVELIN.

## No. XXVII.

Translation of a Letter from Lord Grenville to Monsieur Chauvelin, 20th January, 1793.

Whitehall, 20th January, 1793.

I HAVE received, Sir, your letter of the 17th of this month.

I have already informed you, that His Majesty has reserved to himself the right of deciding, according as he shall think fit, on the two questions, of acknowledging a new form of Government in France, and of receiving a Minister accredited on the part of any other authority in France than that of His Most Christian Majesty. And in answer to the demand which you now make to me, whether His Majesty will receive your new letters of credence? I am to inform you, that His Majesty does not think fit, under the present circumstances, to receive those letters.

The demand which you make to me is equally incompatible with the form of an official communication, and with the character in which you have hitherto been acknowledged, of Minister from His Most Christian Majesty. It only remains for me then, on the subject of your letter, especially after what has just passed in France, to inform you, that as agent, charged with a confidential communication, you might certainly have expected the necessary measures on our part for the safety of your letters, and of your messengers; that as Minister from the Most Christian King, you would have enjoyed all the exemptions which the law grants to public Ministers, recognized as such; but that as a private person, you cannot but return to the general mass of foreigners resident in England.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

GRENVILLE.

## No. XXVIII.

Translation of a Letter from Lord Grenville to Monsieur Chauvelin, January 24th, 1793.

Whitehall, January 24th, 1793.

I AM charged to notify to you, Sir, that the character with which you had been invested at this Court, and the functions of which have been so long suspended, being now entirely terminated, by the fatal death of his late Most Christian Majesty, you have no more any public character here.

The King can no longer, after such an event, permit your residence here. His Majesty has thought fit to order, that you should retire from this kingdom within the term of eight days; and I herewith transmit to you a copy of the order which His Majesty, in his Privy Council, has given to this effect.

I send you a passport for yourself and your suite; and I shall not fail to take all the other necessary steps, in order that you may return to France, with all the attentions which are due to the character of Minister Plenipotentiary from His Most Christian Majesty, which you have exercised at this Court.

I have the honour to be &c,

GRENVILLE.

## No. XXIX.

Translation of a Letter from Monsieur Chauvelin to Lord Grenville, dated 24th January, 1793.

Portman Square, 24th January, 1793,  
second year of the Republic.

My Lord,

I RECEIVED an hour ago, through Mr. Aust, the letter which you have done me the honour to write to me, together with the papers annexed to it. I intend to set out to-morrow morning for France; those of my household, who are not able

to follow me, will all have departed before the period specified in the order which you have transmitted to me.

The precautions which you have announced to me as intended to be taken for the safety of my departure, will extend themselves assuredly, my Lord, in a more particular manner, to the papers of the French Embassy, which have been deposited, in trust, with me since my arrival in this country.--- Monsieur Rheinhard, who is employed immediately next to me in this mission, will remain here five days after me to put them in order. I hope you will approve his waiting upon Mr. Aust, to ask of him a passport nearly of the same nature with that which I have received; and to make several observations to him with regard to the precautions which he may think fitting and necessary to be taken for the safe conveyance of these papers, for which he remains responsible.

I have the honour to be, &c.

(Signed)

F. CHAUVELIN,

No. XXX.

Copy of His Majesty's Order in Council, of the 24th January, 1793.

At the Court at the Queen's House, the 24<sup>th</sup> of January, 1793;

P R E S E N T,

The KING's Most Excellent MAJESTY in Council.

HIS Majesty in Council is pleased to order, and it is hereby ordered, that Monsieur Chauvelin, who was received by His Majesty, on the second day of May 1792, as Minister Plenipotentiary accredited by his late Most Christian Majesty, do depart this realm on or before the first day of February next; and that the right honourable Lord Grenville, His Majesty's principal Secretary of State for foreign affairs, do make known this His Majesty's order to the said Monsieur Chauvelin.

(Signed)

W. FAWKENER.

*Thursday, 31st January.*

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved, “ that the thanks of the House should be given to the Rev. Mr. Samuel Hay, Chaplain to the House, for his sermon preached in St. Margaret’s Church yesterday, and that he should be requested to print the same.—Agreed to.

Mr. Chancellor PITT declared, that pursuant to the order of the day, it would have been his wish that His Majesty’s message should have been taken into consideration immediately, if one particular circumstance had not operated against his wish: the papers that had been laid before the House were too voluminous for gentlemen to have attained yet an adequate knowledge of their contents. This circumstance would be sufficient to justify a motion he should make for postponing the consideration of His Majesty’s message, and the consequent address, till to-morrow. As it was his desire, however, to avoid unnecessary delay, he proposed, if the House acceded to the address to-morrow, to proceed immediately afterwards to the vote of seamen; for gentlemen would observe that the supply of seamen would necessarily be implicated in the consideration of the address, and therefore the subsequent discussion on the number of them would not occupy much time. The number he meant to propose would be 20,000 in addition to the 25,000 already voted. He concluded with moving, that the consideration of His Majesty’s message should be adjourned till to-morrow.

Mr. GREY objected not to the motion, because he felt that on a subject of such infinite importance as the present, as much caution should be observed as was consistent with the exigencies of the existing circumstances; but he wished to put it to the right honourable gentleman, whether it would not be prudent to postpone the consideration of the address to Monday. And his reason for entertaining such a wish was, that though several papers were in the possession of the Members, yet it was necessary that sufficient time should be allowed for arguing them, and for comparing one with the other; besides, though he was ignorant what measures Mr. Pitt meant to propose, it appeared to him, that all the necessary information had not been laid before the House. There was a chafin

from the 8th of July to the 19th of November, in which it did not appear that any communication had taken place with the Executive Council of France between that period. He wished to know whether this was the fact. He also wished to be informed, whether any communication had passed between any agents of the Executive Council. The third description of papers necessary, were those which contained the information transmitted to Administration by Lord Auckland at the Hague. Lastly, it was indispensably necessary that the House should know what requisitions had been made on the part of Holland, and what was the opinion of the Dutch with respect to a war. If satisfactory information was not afforded him on all these points, he declared that he would make a motion to-morrow for the purpose of obtaining it. At present he should content himself with attending Mr. Pitt's motion, by inserting the word "Monday," instead of the word "To-morrow."

Major MAITLAND seconded the amendment.

Mr. Chancellor PITT, in reply, observed, that Mr. Grey had confessed his ignorance of the measures which it was his intention to propose. He would assure, however, the honourable Member, that he should state to-morrow, from the papers already laid before the House, sufficient grounds to induce the House to concur readily with the motion he should have the honour to make. But, should a different fate attend his motion; should gentlemen be of opinion that he had stated insufficient grounds, Mr. Grey might then, with perfect propriety, move for information. At present, he trusted, that the honourable gentleman would not press any other motion whose tendency should be to procure farther documents.

Mr. SHERIDAN allowed that there was one point in which all agreed, that no measures ought to be adopted without mature and deep consideration. That to-morrow would allow sufficient time for such consideration, he felt very much inclined to doubt. Mr. Pitt, however, had not answered those observations made by Mr. Grey, with respect to the necessity of farther information; and indeed from a cursory view of those documents laid before the House, he conceived that they contradicted what were asserted to be notorious facts. The question which the House had a right to ask was, whether the papers in the possession of the Members justified the possible case

of a war? Indeed it could not be denied that a complete and ample communication of every particular ought to be given to the country, in order to convince the people, if a war should take place, that such a calamity could not be averted. With respect to the chasm stated by Mr. Grey, it was rather extraordinary that notice had been taken in Mr. Brissot's report of the amicable communication that had existed between the Executive Council of France and this country, at the very period in which the chasm occurred. Another material circumstance was, that the House was totally in the dark with respect to the opening of the Scheldt.

Mr. Grey's amendment was negatived. The original motion was consequently carried.

A conversation ensued between Mr. Pitt and Mr. Grey, relative to the production of the papers alluded to by the latter.

The SPEAKER acquainted Mr. Pitt, that if the address was moved to-morrow, the supply could not be voted on the same day.

The House adjourned.

*Friday, 1st February.*

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS rose to move for leave to bring in a bill for restoring a clause which usually made a part of the former militia acts, but which rather through accident, he believed, than design, had been left out of the last. This clause was for making a provision for the wives and children of persons drawn by lot to serve in the militia; a provision which he meant to extend to the wives and children of persons serving therein as substitutes. He said, he had received letters from many respectable gentlemen on the subject of the militia, suggesting various improvements in that branch of the public service; if he had not adopted them, and included them in the present plan, it was not because he did not think them deserving of attention, but because it was of great consequence to the service, that the measure which he was at present going to propose, should be carried into effect with all possible dispatch for the benefit of the families of men actually serving: should the improvements suggested be comprized in the same bill, he was well aware that delay would be the consequence, as the whole of the militia laws would be laid open to discussion. He



did not deny but this might be attended with good effects ; but he thought that the best way the House could proceed in would be to take that business up as a separate measure, and allow the bill which he now wanted to introduce, to pass with all possible expedition. Having said this, he moved “ for leave “ to bring in a bill for explaining and amending an act of “ the 19th of the present King, respecting the militia.”

The motion was agreed to without any opposition, and Mr. Dundas and Mr. Hobart were directed to prepare and bring in the bill.

Mr. SHERIDAN rose to give notice of a motion on a subject to which he meant to call the attention of the House on Friday next ; namely, the sedition and seditious practices at present existing in this kingdom, and what ought to be the conduct of the House on that subject.

Mr. GREY said, that were he to consider the manner in which the notice which he gave yesterday of a motion respecting certain papers, was received by the right honourable gentleman over against him, he should feel but little hopes of success this day, and little encouragement to proceed. The manner to which he alluded, was not justified by any incivility on his part to the right honourable gentleman, for certainly he did not mean any personal incivility to him in calling for certain explanations, which he thought the House ought to be in possession of, before it could decide upon the important question which was that day to be brought under discussion. The right honourable gentleman perhaps had been influenced by a sense of his superiority of talents and of power, which made him deem it unnecessary, or below his dignity, to give answers to persons on the opposition side of the House ; he might also feel bolder, and consequently less complaisant, on account of the disunion of those who had hitherto opposed his Administration. As for his own part he was fully conscious how inferior he was to the right honourable gentleman both in talents and in power ; but still he felt what was due to the character of an independent Member of Parliament : the haughty arrogance of an individual might be indecently employed to check the ardour of a representative of the people ; but whilst he had the honour of a seat in that House, he would not suffer himself to be di-

vered by any thing that a Minister could do from pursuing that line of conduct his duty to his constituents should point out.

When he yesterday asked the right honourable gentleman some plain questions, respecting the existence of certain papers, the answer he got was, "specify the papers you want, " and the House will consider whether they ought to be granted." The papers already before the House are sufficient to warrant the motion which I intend to make; and even without these papers, I might rest the defence of it upon the notoriety of many acts done by France, which loudly call for some vigorous measures on the part of England. It was very possible, Mr. Grey observed, that the papers on the table might be sufficient for the right honourable gentleman's purpose; he best knew what that purpose was; but a representative of the people, who were to bear the burdens of the war, into which the right honourable gentleman's measures were leading the country, ought, before he consented to a war, to have before him every document that could prove that the war was unavoidable, and absolutely necessary. Come when it would, or in what shape, war must be deemed a great calamity, and nothing but dire necessity could justify a nation in engaging in it. In speaking on that subject, he could not express himself in more forcible terms than those which were used by a late unfortunate monarch, (Louis XVI.) who, in addressing the National Assembly, said, "Humanity forbids us to shed blood, " unless when we are driven to it by imperious necessity." In rising this day to move for more papers than the right honourable gentleman had thought proper to produce, his only object was, to discover whether such a necessity existed in the present case, as far as Great Britain and her allies were concerned; and whether our Ministers had employed all the means in their power, consistent with national honour and security, to avert a war. The right honourable gentleman himself did not seem, notwithstanding all his boasting to the contrary, to trust solely to the papers on the table for a proof of the necessity of the war; for other papers had been circulated, not indeed at the door of the house, containing a collection of speeches made by Members of the National Convention, and decrees passed by that Assembly against monarchy, religious establishments, and religion itself, all which were calculated not to enlighten, but

to mislead the judgement, because they could not well fail to move the passions of the readers. These papers were collected into a pamphlet, which he verily believed to be circulated by the Treasury, and brought in aid of the papers which the right honourable gentleman had communicated to the House. Thus it would appear, that the latter really were, in the opinion even of the right honourable gentleman himself, whatever he might affect to believe to the contrary, absolutely insufficient to direct the judgement of the House, in a business of such magnitude, as whether the nation should, or should not, be plunged into a war. The papers for which he intended to move, in addition to those already on the table, were those, if any such there were, as had passed between our Ministers and the French Ambassador at our Court, between the 8th of July and the 19th of November 1792, during which period there appeared to be a chasm in the printed communication. He meant next to move for such papers, if any, as had been received by our Ministers from other French agents; and for copies of the correspondence between His Majesty's Ambassador at the Hague and the French Executive Council. He was the more anxious to learn whether any such correspondence had taken place, as he found that Mr. Brissot had asserted, in a report made to the National Convention, that in October and November last, an amicable negociation had been opened with the British Government. He was aware, that in the report to which he alluded, there was a palpable inconsistency, for it was stated, that what had made the English Minister so complaisant, as to agree to this negociation, was the splendid victory gained by the French arms at Jemmappe: now he was ready to admit, that it was absurd to say, that a victory gained on the 6th of November, could have made the English Ministers consent to a negociation in the month of October. But still it was asserted, let the cause have been what it might, that a negociation was opened in October; the object, purport, and extent of it were unknown to the House; but it was fit that every thing relating to it should be made known, before gentlemen could be said to be fairly and fully in possession of all that was necessary to direct their judgement in the great question that was to be that night brought before them. The last papers for which he intended to move, were copies of such re-

quisitions as had been made by the States General of the United Provinces, for the performance of the engagement into which this country had entered, for maintaining to the Republic the exclusive navigation of the Scheldt. The House, he said, must see the necessity for producing these papers; for if England was to enter into a war on account of engagements with Holland, three things ought to be made to appear; first, that the engagements exist; secondly, that the case on account of which we are called upon for the performance of them, is a *casus fœderis*; and thirdly, that we have actually been required to fulfil them. No man had a higher sense than he had of the binding nature of solemn treaties, and of the good faith with which they ought to be executed; but still he did not see that a nation was bound to stand forward unasked, and prepare to fulfill engagements, before it was required to arm by the State standing in need of assistance. To shew how matters stood in this respect between England and Holland, was the subject of his last motion, and as it appeared to him to be the most important of all, so he trusted that the House would see the propriety of adopting it. Having said this, he moved, “ That  
 “ there be laid before this House, An account of all the com-  
 “ munications that have passed between His Majesty’s Mini-  
 “ sters and the Executive Government of France, or their  
 “ agents, from the 8th of July, to the 19th of November,  
 “ 1792.”

The question was, with leave, withdrawn.

“ That there be laid before this House, An account of all  
 “ the claims and requisitions made on the part of the States  
 “ General of the United Provinces, upon the subject of the  
 “ treaty concluded in 1788, between Great Britain and the  
 “ said States General, as far as the same relate to the exclusive  
 “ navigation of the Scheldt, and of any application made by  
 “ the said States General to this Government, on the ground  
 “ of treaty, for our assistance and interference in the present  
 “ circumstances respecting France.”

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he presumed that neither the honourable gentleman nor the House expected that he should, on this collateral motion, go into a discussion of topics which would, with much more propriety and regularity, be brought forward when he should have the honour of moving the address,

of which he had given notice for that night. He meant, therefore, literally to confine himself to the consideration of the papers which the honourable gentleman wished to have produced, and to shew that in some of the cases alluded to no such papers were in existence, and that in others, such as did exist, either could not or ought not to be produced. The House already knew that soon after July, viz. early in the month of August, His Majesty had been pleased to recall his Ambassador from Paris; from that period to the 19th of November all communication ceased between the two countries, except in some particular instances in no degree whatever connected with matters at present under discussion: there was indeed a communication from the French Government respecting the conduct of the Princes of the House of Bourbon, but nothing regarding England, and some others of a private nature respecting the property of individuals in the island of Tobago; so that in reality there were no papers in any way relating to the objects in dispute between the two countries, received from Mons. Chauvelin between the 8th of July and the 19th of November last. The honourable gentleman's second motion he understood to be for papers received from other agents of the French Government. On this head he would say that no such papers existed. It appeared, indeed, from one of the papers already on the table, that when affairs began to wear a serious aspect, His Majesty's Ministers were willing to agree to some extra-official mode of treating; and that to this end Lord Grenville had admitted Mons. Chauvelin to an interview; what passed at it could not be laid before the House, because it was not reduced to writing, but delivered verbally, and in the way of conversation. The substance of such extra-official conferences had never been considered as proper subjects to be laid before Parliament, because the substance of them could be collected only from memory, and consequently it might be inaccurately given; and secondly, because such conferences generally led to, and might be considered as the preliminaries to some specific written documents, on which measures might afterwards be grounded. He recollected also, that he himself had had some conference (the first on the 3d of December last) with a person who did not style himself an agent from the French Government, but represented himself as one in the confidence

of some of those in whose hands was the exercise of authority in France. What passed at these conferences was not in writing, and therefore could not be produced : he had agreed to this extra-official way of doing business, in the hope that some offer would be made which would satisfy Great Britain, but nothing of the kind was made ; and in the end the person to whom he alluded referred him to Mons. Chauvelin to learn from him the farther intentions of the Executive Council. The honourable gentleman wished also, that such correspondence as had taken place between His Majesty's Ambassador at the Hague and the Executive Council of France, or with any other persons in that country, should be laid before the House. He could assure the honourable gentleman that he knew of no communication between Lord Auckland and the Executive Council, and therefore he could not produce it. On the other hand, if that noble Lord had thought it his duty to open a correspondence with particular persons in France, which might eventually lead to the benefit of this country, he was of opinion that the production of any papers which passed on such an occasion would be a breach of every rule of policy, discretion, and honour. The honourable gentleman's last motion was for copies of such requisitions as had been made by Holland for the performance of the engagements into which England had entered for securing to the former the exclusive navigation of the Scheldt. On this head he was ready to admit, that if the honourable gentleman meant requisitions for the contingent of troops which England was bound by treaty to furnish for maintaining the exclusive navigation of the Scheldt, no such requisitions had been made ; but this circumstance, so far from weakening, would, as he should shew when the King's message should be under consideration, strengthen the proposition which he intended to move on that subject. On the other hand, lest the honourable gentleman or the House should be led into an opinion that Holland was without alarms, and perfectly at ease, he thought it his duty to say that the Dutch had repeatedly expressed their solicitude for the presence of a British force to defend them against an attack in the Scheldt, which they had reason to apprehend. In answering the different questions put by the honourable gentleman, he had carefully avoided going into a discussion on the contents of any of

the papers in question, because he would not anticipate the debate which would come on upon the motion for the address. If he did not answer the honourable gentleman yesterday, it was because he wished to be able to speak with greater accuracy, and to be perfectly clear that no paper, which could or ought to be presented to the House, had been withheld.

Mr. SHERIDAN observed, that when the right honourable gentleman said he had avoided going into a discussion on the contents of the papers, he meant to insinuate that his honourable friend (Mr. Grey) had gone into collateral matters, not necessarily connected with arguments, merely for the production of papers ; but the insinuation was unfounded ; for his honourable friend had not uttered a single sentence which was not closely connected with the object of his motions. The right honourable gentleman's refusal yesterday to say as much as he did that day, or to give any answer or explanation at all, could be ascribed only to ministerial arrogance. It was, however, some consolation to his honourable friend, that he was not the only person to whom the right honourable gentleman was so insultingly reserved ; for it would appear that he had concealed even from his colleague (Mr. Secretary Dundas) the circumstance of the conferences which he this day allowed he had had with an unauthorized agent of France ; for that right honourable colleague had, on a former day, declared, in language astonishingly perspicuous, " that he did not believe " that it was compatible with his belief that any thing more " had passed between the French Government and His Majesty's Ministers than what passed through the hands of " Mons. Chauvelin."

Mr. FOX said, he did not mean to take up a minute of the time of the House on this subject ; he rose only for the purpose of asking whether he rightly understood the right honourable gentleman on one or two points. The right honourable gentleman had said, that he knew of no communication between Lord Auckland and the French Executive Council : if he meant that they had not communicated personally, he had said no more than was known before to every one, because it was a matter of notoriety that Lord Auckland had not been at Paris during the summer or present winter, and that the Executive Council had not visited the Hague. But he wished to

know whether the right honourable gentleman meant to say that Lord Auckland had not any communication with the Executive Council through the medium of any minister or agent employed by the latter. Lord Auckland certainly would not negotiate with the Government of France, without authority for that purpose from his own Government ; and if such authority was given to him, his dispatches in consequence of it ought to be laid before Parliament, as well as any paper delivered in London by the French Ambassador to our Ministers at home, or by them to him. As to the conferences which the right honourable gentleman had stated to have taken place in England, with agents from France, he admitted, that what was verbally transacted at the time, could not be as regularly laid before Parliament, as transactions which were wholly in writing. But still it was known that what was generally called a verbal communication in diplomatic language, was almost always on paper, and was called sometimes *une note verbale* ; at all events, a minute of the conference was made for the information of the King and his Council ; and therefore it was practicable to lay such minute or *note verbale* before Parliament, and the only question that could arise upon it, was, whether it would be proper to produce it. With respect to Holland, there was one point on which he wished for some explanation. The right honourable gentleman had admitted that no formal requisition had been made by that country, for the contingent of men which England was bound by treaty to furnish ; but he said at the same time, that Holland had repeatedly expressed her solicitude for the presence of a British force. What he wanted to know was, whether it was in consequence of the treaty, that such force was wished for, or not. It might be that Holland demanded this force on the ground that we were bound by treaty to send it ; or it might be that she wished for it on the ground that our own interest, independent of any treaty, ought to induce us to grant such assistance. He was anxious to know on which of these grounds the presence of the British force was desired. If it was on the score of the treaty, there was not the least ground for deliberation ; we had promised to furnish a quota of troops, and were bound by national faith and national honour, which were paramount to every other consideration, to fulfil our engagements.



But if the Dutch grounded their requisition on the principle that our own interest should induce us to defend them, then the question would be of a very different nature indeed; it would not be a question of faith or of honour, but of policy, prudence, and discretion; and as in the one case we were bound without hesitation to furnish the stipulated quota; so in the other we might refuse to give any aid at all, unless it should be evident that our own interest called upon us to stand forward and defend the Republic. The motion of his honourable friend on this subject he thought of great moment, and it would, in his opinion, be proper for him to press it upon the House; but as for the others, he would advise him, after the explanation given by the right honourable gentleman, to withdraw and drop them.

Mr. Chancellor PITT rose to explain one point which seemed not to have been sufficiently understood by the right honourable gentleman who had spoke last. With respect to Lord Auckland, what he meant to say was, that he knew of no communication between that noble Lord, and the Executive Council of France, through the medium of any agent or agents of the latter acting as such.

Mr. GREY consented to withdraw the motion then before the House, and to give up the next two motions, which he intended to have made; but he moved the fourth, respecting Holland, which was negatived without any farther debate, and without a division.

The SPEAKER having read His Majesty's message, and the order of the day for taking it into consideration,

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, amidst the many important objects arising from the message of His Majesty, which now came to be considered, there was one which particularly called for their attention. That attention, indeed, could not fail to be separately directed to that calamitous event, (the murder of the French King) that act of outrage to every principle of religion, justice, and humanity; an act which in this country, and the whole of Europe, had excited but one general sentiment of indignation and abhorrence, and could not fail to excite the same sentiments in every civilized nation. He should, indeed, better consult his own feelings, and those of the House, could he draw a veil over this melancholy event. It

was in all its circumstances so full of grief and horror, that it must be a wish, in which all united, to tear it, if possible, from their memories, to expunge it from the page of history, and remove it for ever from the observation and comments of mankind.

*Excidat ille dies avo, neu postera credant  
Secula? nos certe taceamus, et obruta multa  
Nocte tegi nostræ patiamur crimina gentis.*

Such, he continued, were the words applied by an author of their own, to an occasion (the massacre of St. Bartholomew) which had always been deemed the standing reproach of the French nation, and the horrors and cruelties of which had only been equalled by those atrocious and sanguinary proceedings which had been witnessed in some late instances. But whatever might be their feelings of indignation and abhorrence with respect to that dreadful and inhuman event to which he had set out with calling their attention; that event now was past; it was impossible that the present age should not now be contaminated with the guilt and ignominy of having witnessed it, or that the breath of tradition should be prevented from handing it down to posterity. They could now only enter their solemn protestation against that event, as contrary to every sentiment of justice and humanity, as violating the most sacred authority of laws, and the strongest principles of natural feeling. Hence, however, they might derive an useful theme of reflection—a lesson of salutary warning. For, in this dreadful transaction, they saw concentrated the effect of those principles pushed to their utmost extent, which set out with dissolving all the bonds of legislation by which society were held together, which were established in opposition to every law, divine and human, and presumptuously relying on the authority of wild and delusive theories, rejected all the advantages of the wisdom and experience of former ages, and even the sacred instructions of Revelation.—While therefore he directed their attention to this transaction, he paid not only a tribute to humanity, but he suggested to them a subject of much useful reflection: for, by considering the consequences of these principles, they might be duly warned of their mischievous tendency, and taught to guard against their progress.

Indeed he wished that this subject might on the present occasion be considered rather as matter of reason and reflection, than of sentiment. Sentiment was now unavailing; but reason and reflection might be attended with the most beneficial effects; and while they pointed out the horrid evils which had disgraced and ruined another country, might preserve our own from exhibiting a scene of similar calamity and guilt. No consideration indeed could be more connected with a country like this, or of greater importance, than what tended to avert such transactions as had taken place in that neighbouring state. Here, where a monarch formed an essential part of the Government, clothed with that inviolability which was essential to the exercise of the Sovereign power; where the Legislature was composed of a mixture of democracy and aristocracy; and where, by the benefits of this system, we had been exempted from those mischiefs which in former ages had been produced by despotism, and which were only to be exceeded by those still more horrid evils which in the present time had been found to be the fruits of licentiousness and anarchy.

The situation of this country, he must, indeed, compare to the temperate Zone, which was the situation in every respect best fitted for health and enjoyment; and where, enjoying a mild, beneficial, regulated influence, the inhabitants were equally protected from the scorching heats of the torrid, and the rigorous frosts of the Frigid Zones. Compared with this country, where equal protection was extended to all, and there existed so high a sum of national felicity, dreadful indeed was the contrast afforded in the present situation of France, where there prevailed a system of the utmost licentiousness and disorder, and anarchy through a thousand organs operated to produce unnumbered mischiefs. Such a system could surely never find its way into this happy country, unless industriously imported; and to guard against the introduction of such a system was their first duty and their most important care. He now proceeded to state, the situation of France had already been much the subject of discussion in that House, particularly at the opening of the session. Many comments, which from his absence he had not an opportunity of hearing, had been made on the conduct of the French, as even then affording much ground for jealousy and precaution. But if such was

the alarm which had been taken up from His Majesty's speech, at the opening of the session, what were now the circumstances on which His Majesty's message had come down to the House? Mr. Pitt now proceeded to remark on the different papers which had been laid on the table, and printed for the use of the Members. He trusted, he said, that they were sufficiently acquainted with the contents of those papers, to be able to follow him in the references which he should have occasion to make.

It would appear from the first paper that the system on which His Majesty had uniformly acted, was founded on the very principles which had afterwards dictated the necessity of his making preparations. His Majesty had declined taking any part in the internal Government of France, and had made a positive declaration to that effect. When he took that wise, generous, and disinterested resolution, he had reason to expect that the French would in return have respected the rights of himself, and his allies, and most of all, that they would not have attempted any internal interference in this country. A paper on the table contained on their part a positive contract to abstain from any of those acts by which they had provoked the indignation of this country. In this paper they disclaimed all views of aggrandizement; they gave assurances of their good conduct to neutral nations; they protested against their entertaining an idea of interfering in the Government of the country, or making any attempts to excite insurrection, upon the express ground (stated in the paper) that such interference, and such attempts, would be a violation of the law of nations. They had themselves, by anticipation, passed sentence upon their own conduct; and the event of this evening's discussion would decide, whether that sentence would be confirmed by those who had actually been injured. During the whole summer, while France had been engaged in the war with Austria and Prussia, His Majesty had in no shape departed from the neutrality which he had engaged to observe, nor did he, by the smallest act, give any reason to suspect his adherence to that system.

But what, he would ask, was the conduct of the French?—Had they also faithfully observed their part of the agreement, and adhered to the assurances which, on the ground of His

Majesty's neutrality, they had given, to reject all views of aggrandizement, not to interfere with neutral nations, and to respect the rights of His Majesty and his allies? What had been their conduct would very soon appear from the statement of facts. They had immediately shewed how little sincere they were in their first assurances, by discovering intentions to pursue a system of the most unlimited aggrandizement, if they were not opposed and checked in their career. The first instance of their success in Savoy had been sufficient to unfold the plan of their ambition. They had immediately adopted the course to annex it for ever to their own dominions, and had displayed a resolution to do the same, wherever they should carry their arms. That they might not leave any doubt of their intentions, by a formal decree, they had stated their plan of overturning every Government, and substituting their own; they threatened destruction to all who should not be inclined to adopt their system of freedom, and, by a horrid mockery, offered fraternization, where, if it was refused, they were determined to employ force, and to propagate their principles where they should fail to gain assent by the mouths of cannon. They established, in the instructions to the Commissioners whom they appointed to enforce the decree with respect to the countries entered by their armies, a standing revolutionary order; they instituted a system of organizing disorganization. And what was the reason which they assigned for all this? "The period of freedom," said they, "must soon come: we must then endeavour, by all means in our power, to accomplish it now: for should this freedom be accomplished by other nations, what then will become of us? Shall we then be safe?" It is a question indeed which they might well put, "What will become of us?" for justly might they entertain doubts of their safety. They had rendered the Netherlands a province, in substance as well as name, entirely dependent upon France. That system, pursued by the Jacobin societies, in concert with their correspondents, had given a more fatal blow to liberty, than any which it had ever suffered from the boldest attempts of the most aspiring monarch. What had been the circumstances which had attended the triumphal entry of General Dumourier? Demonstrations of joy inspired by terror, illuminations imperiously demanded by an armed force. And when

the Primary Assembly met to deliberate, in what circumstances did they assemble? With the tree of liberty planted amidst them, and surrounded by a hollow square of French soldiers; a situation surely equally conducive to the ease of their own thoughts, and the freedom of their public deliberations. And what had happened even since the French had professed their intention of evacuating the territories which they had entered, at the conclusion of the war? A deputation had been received from Hainault, requesting that it might be added as an eighty-fifth department. And how had this deputation been received? Had the request been rejected? No, it had only been postponed till a Committee should be able to prepare instructions, how those nations, who should be desirous of the same union, should be able to incorporate themselves with France in a regular and formal manner, till the preliminaries should be settled by which it should be subject to its Government, and add to its territories, every country which should be so unfortunate as to experience the force of its arms, and give to its wild and destructive ambition only the same limits with those of its power. It was matter of serious consideration, how far such a conduct not only ought to rouse the indignation, but might tend to affect the interests of this country. To shew how the French had behaved with respect to neutral nations, he need only refer to their decree of the 19th November, which had already been so often mentioned and so amply discussed. He should, from a compilation \* which had been this day put into his hand (and of which, notwithstanding he might be reproached as a publisher of pamphlets, he highly approved, as it concentrated in one point of view all the grounds of offence which the French had given to this country) read an extract from this decree. He then read that passage in which the French grant fraternity to all those people who should be desirous to gain their freedom, and offer them assistance for that purpose. By the bye, he remarked, that to grant fraternity was a curious stile of equality.

\* Vide a Collection of Addresses transmitted by certain English Clubs and Societies to the National Convention of France, Printed for J. Debrett, Piccadilly.

And that none might be at a loss to know to whom the French nation were disposed to grant this relationship of younger brothers, they had ordered the decree to be printed in all languages, by which it might be perceived, that they intended the favour for all nations who chose to accept of it.— Some pretended explanations had indeed been given of this decree, but of all these explanations he should say nothing but what had already been stated by the noble Secretary of State, that they contained only an avowal and a repetition of the offence. The whole of their language, institutions, and conduct, had been directed to the total subversion of every Government. To monarchy particularly they had testified the most decided aversion, and so violent was their enmity, that they could be satisfied with nothing less than its entire extermination. The bloody sentence, which the hand of the assassin had lately carried into execution against their own monarch, was passed against the Sovereigns of all countries. Were not these principles intended to be applied in their effects to this Government? No society in this country, however small in number, however contemptible, however even questionable in existence, had sent addresses to their assembly, in which they had expressed sentiments of sedition and treason, which had not been received with a degree even of theatrical extravagance, and cherished with all the enthusiasm of congenial feeling. Need he then ask, if England was not aimed at by this conduct, and if it alone was to be exempted from the consequences of a system, the profession of which was anarchy, and which seemed to aspire to establish universal dominion upon the ruin of every Government. On the subject of the violation of the rights of His Majesty and his allies, he had already on a former occasion spoken at some length. He had stated, that the only claim which the French could have to interfere in the navigation of the Scheldt must either be in the assumed character of Sovereigns of the Low Countries, or as taking to themselves the office of the arbiters of Europe.— They were the most solemn engagements of treaties to protect the Dutch in their exclusive right of navigating the Scheldt. And an infringement of treaties more notorious, and more flagrant, perhaps never had occurred, than that which now appeared in the instance of their conduct with respect to the

Scheldt. For this infringement they had advanced some pretences, alledging that the exclusive privilege of navigating the Scheldt was contrary to certain principles with respect to the rights of rivers. Capricious and wild in their theory, and in entire contradiction to whatever had been sanctioned by established practice, they likewise pretend, that the treaty, on which was founded the exclusive right of navigating the Scheldt, was antiquated and obsolete, and had become no longer binding, though they had themselves, upon receiving the assurances of His Majesty's intentions of neutrality, pledged themselves to an observance of all the subsisting treaties. The pretences which they alledged upon this occasion, were indeed such as equally went to weaken the force of every treaty, to remove every obligation, and destroy all confidence between nations. From what had passed in a former part of the evening, he understood that it would be urged, that the Dutch had made no formal requisition for the support of this country, in order to resist the opening of the Scheldt by the French, and to enable them to maintain their right to the exclusive navigation of that river. He granted that no such formal requisition had been made. But might there not be prudential reasons for not making this requisition on their part, very different from those which should induce this country to withhold its support? When the French opened the Scheldt, the Dutch entered their solemn protest against that invasion of their rights, which left them at liberty, at any time, to take it up as an act of hostility. If, from the sudden progress of the French arms, and the circumstance of their forces being at their very door, they, either from prudence or fear, did not think proper to take it up as an immediate commencement of hostilities; because they had been timid, would England think itself intitled to leave its allies, already involved in a situation of imminent danger, to that certain ruin to which they were exposed, in consequence of a system, the principles of which threatened also destruction to England, to Europe, and to the whole of mankind? Thus in all those three assurances which they had given of their intention to reject any system of aggrandizement, to abstain from interfering in the Government of any neutral country, and to respect the rights of His Majesty and of his allies, they had entirely failed, and in every respect completely



reversed that line of conduct which they had so solemnly pledged themselves to adopt. Whatever they had offered under the name of explanations contained nothing that either afforded any compensation for the past, or was at all satisfactory with respect to the future. They had stated that they would evacuate the Netherlands at the conclusion of the war—upon a promise so illusory there could not be the smallest grounds of dependance. With respect to their decree of 19th Nov. they had made no apology for the manner in which they had received seditious addresses from this country. They stated indeed that it was injurious to them to suppose that they would interfere in any Government without a previous express declaration of the national will: but they had left themselves to judge what was sufficient to constitute that declaration of the national will, and thus allowed this decree, which in fact was nothing else than an advertisement for sedition in every country to remain in full force; and what in their opinion was to constitute a declaration of the national will we could only judge of from the manner in which they had received seditious addresses from a majority in this country so small, that those who were disposed to put the conduct of the French in the most favourable point of view, held them out as too contemptible for notice: these addresses they received as expressive of the sentiments of the People of Great Britain, the great majority of whom he was, however, happy to say detested their principles—principles which, if once adopted, would involve in them the ruin of our happy Constitution, and the destruction of our country, and introduce anarchy and all those scenes of horror with which the country which had broached them was now afflicted: but the patience of the House and his strength would fail him, should he proceed to state all the facts connected with the propositions which he now meant to lay before them. On the 27th of December M. Chauvelin, on the part of the Executive Council, had presented the note complaining of the injurious construction of the decree of the 19th of November. On the 31st of December a Member of that Executive Council (Minister of the Marine) addressed a letter to all the friends of liberty in the sea-ports; from which he would now read some passages:

“ The Government of England is arming, and the King of Spain, encouraged by this, is preparing to attack us. These two tyrannical powers, after persecuting the patriots on their own territories, think, no doubt, that they shall be able to influence the judgement to be pronounced on the tyrant Louis. They hope to frighten us : but no—a people who has made itself free—a people who has driven out of the bosom of France, and as far as the distant borders of the Rhine, the terrible army of the Prussians and Austrians—the people of France will not suffer laws to be dictated to them by a tyrant.

“ The King and his Parliament mean to make war against us. Will the English republicans suffer it ? Already these free men shew their discontent, and the repugnance which they have to bear arms against their brothers the French.—Well ! we will fly to their succour—we will make a descent in the island—we will lodge there fifty thousand caps of liberty—we will plant there the sacred tree, and we will stretch out our arms to our republican brethren—the tyranny of their Government will soon be destroyed.”

He called the attention of the House to this declaration, which distinguished the English People from the King and the Parliament, and to the nature of that present which was meant to be made them. While such declarations were made, what could be thought of any explanations which were pretended to be given, or what credit was due to the assertions, that they entertained no intentions hostile to the Government of this country ? From all these circumstances he concluded, that the conduct and pretensions of the French were such as were neither consistent with the existence or safety of this country, such as that House could not, and, he was confident, never would, acquiesce in. Their explanations had only been renewed insults, and instead of reverting to those assurances with which they had originally set out, they now shewed themselves determined to maintain the ground, such as it was, upon which they stood with respect to this country. In the last paper which had been delivered, they had given in an ultimatum, stating, that, unless you accept such satisfaction as they have thought proper to give, they will prepare for war. Unless you then recede from your principles, or they withdraw it, a war

must be the consequence—as to the time, the precise moment, he should not pretend to fix it — it would be left open to the last for any satisfactory explanation; but he should deceive them if he should say that he thought any such explanation would be given, or that it was probable that a war could be avoided: rather than recede from our principles, war was preferable to a peace, which could neither be consistent with the internal tranquillity nor external safety of this country. He concluded, that this was all which he now thought it necessary to say; but that some topic might occur in the course of the evening on which he should have occasion again to crave the indulgence of the House. He then moved,

“ That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, to  
“ return His Majesty the thanks of this House for his most  
“ gracious message, and for the communication of the papers,  
“ which, by His Majesty’s command, have been laid before  
“ us.

“ To offer to His Majesty our heartfelt condolence on the  
“ atrocious act lately perpetrated at Paris, which must be  
“ viewed by every nation in Europe as an outrage on religion,  
“ justice, and humanity, and as a striking and dreadful exam-  
“ ple of the effect of principles which lead to the violation of  
“ the most sacred duties, and are utterly subversive of the  
“ peace and order of all civil society.

“ To assure His Majesty, that it is impossible for us not to  
“ be sensible of the views of aggrandisement and ambition,  
“ which, in violation of repeated and solemn professions, have  
“ been openly manifested on the part of France, and which  
“ are connected with the propagation of principles incompat-  
“ ible with the existence of all just and regular government:  
“ that, under the present circumstances, we consider a vigo-  
“ rous and effectual opposition to these views as essential to the  
“ security of every thing which is most dear and valuable to us  
“ as a nation, and to the future tranquillity and safety of all  
“ other countries.

“ That, impressed with these sentiments, we shall, with the  
“ utmost zeal and alacrity, afford His Majesty the most effec-  
“ tual assistance to enable His Majesty to make a farther aug-  
“ mentation of his forces by sea and land, and to act, as  
“ circumstances may require, in the present important con-

“ juncture, for maintaining the security and honour of his  
“ Crown, for supporting the just rights of his allies, and for  
“ preserving to his People the undisturbed enjoyment of the  
“ blessings which, under the divine Providence, they derive  
“ from the British Constitution.”

Lord BEAUCHAMP seconded the motion. He said, in the address of thanks now about to be voted, the interest not only of the present generation, but of posterity, were deeply involved. It therefore became him, and every good man, to support Government. When he considered the subject of discussion in a cool and deliberate manner, he could not conceive what this country had done to incur the menaces or indignation of France. He could not discover one single instance of outrage or injury against France.

The only fault perhaps which we had committed was the state of neutrality which we had observed since the commencement of her unhappy distractions. Had we interfered sooner, and endeavoured to resist her career of madness, we might very likely have saved France from many of the misfortunes which she had afterwards suffered. If by the extraordinary intemperance of the French, their great fabric of human wisdom, the rights of man, had soon been dissipated or dissolved, was England accessory to its demolition? No—it was impossible to mention one single act which, on our part, could be construed into any acceleration of its downfall. Their ambition was inordinate and unexampled in the history of the world. They penetrated into Savoy for the avowed purpose of freedom; but renouncing that declaration, they were not contented till that country was, by intrigue, added as the eighty-fourth department. Thus, while they pretended to diffuse principles of liberty, they enforced those of conquest, and robbed the people, whom they pretended to aid, of the small remains of their native freedom.

In Brabant the same principles were distinguishable; and thus we were driven to the awful alternative of waging a war against a people boundless in their ambition.

Lord Grenville, in an answer to M. Chauvelin, very properly says, “ You are not ignorant, that, since the unhappy  
“ 10th of August, the King has thought proper to suspend all  
“ communication with France.”

This declaration ought to have served as a denial of the reigning powers of France ; and the French faction, who had degraded Royalty, might have very easily conceived that the intentions of the King of England were inimical to all agitators and anarchists, and that, if provoked, he would exert the power given him by the Constitution to repel the insolence or ambition of men dangerous to the good government of society.

Lord Grenville has been weakly accused of absurdly acknowledging and disavowing M. Chauvelin in his official capacity, while at the same time he enters into a discussion with him concerning the interests of the two countries. This argument might, at first, appear founded ; but, on examination of it, would be evident, that, although Lord Grenville refuses all communication with him in his official capacity, yet that he might take the opportunity of expressing his sentiments as a simple individual ; Lord Grenville certainly meant no more, although his answer was afterwards presented to the world as a state paper of authority from the Court of St. James's. In corroboration of this opinion, let gentlemen examine Lord Grenville's own words—" I have been unwilling to convey to  
" you the notification stated above, without at the same time  
" explaining myself clearly and distinctly on the subject of  
" what you communicated to me, although under a form  
" which is neither regular nor official."

If ever the time should arrive when it may be expedient to receive a Minister from the present Executive Council of France, the measure was not prevented by the declaration of Lord Grenville, who expressly mentioned, " that the proposition of receiving a Minister accredited by any other authority or power in France would be a new question, which, whenever it occurred, the King would have the right to decide according to the interests of his subjects, his own dignity, and the regard which he owes to his allies, and to the general system of Europe."

Thus the decision of the question was given to the proper authority, because His Majesty, in the cases of Ambassadors either to or from foreign Courts, had an undoubted right to sanction or reject, according to the temporary emergency. If it be evident that the system of the Executive Council of

France, supported by the Convention, is to encourage disorder and revolt in other countries, how can England remain neutral? The most superficial observer may easily conceive, that after France has distracted and overturned other Governments, her inordinate ambition will induce her to make similar attempts against the rights and liberties of England. The grand system of French policy now adopted is the fomenting of discord and sedition in other countries. Having hostile intentions against Holland, she is making every effort to seduce the Dutch from their allegiance to the Stadtholder, and, if suffered, may soon throw that country into a state of anarchy and confusion, overturn the ancient government, and introduce the new system so dangerous to society, and so destructive of real liberty and property. If seriously considered, the union of Corsica with France in the new doctrines might have been urged as a sufficient reason for the commencement of hostilities, because such a junction was dangerous to the balance of power. He lamented as much as any man the calamities of war, and perhaps ought not to have censured Mr. Pitt for his resistance of the measure till the present urgency. Had he attempted the expedient sooner, the Public would, in all probability, not have suffered it. The Minister of a free country was differently situated from the servant of an absolute prince. He must wait with patience for the will of the People. That time was now arrived when every good man was of opinion that our interference was necessary for the safety of Europe. Some praised the success which the French had obtained by the victory of Jemappe. For his part, he was more parsimonious in his panegyric of that event, because from it he dated many of the calamities which followed. The battle of Jemappe had done more to the aggrandisement of France, by giving it the possession of Brabant, than any other event.

What had Dumourier's entry into Brabant produced? Not that generous spirit of liberty so much vaunted by the French before they took possession of the territories: but the *joyeuse entrée* was succeeded by the bonfire, in which was burnt the Magna Charta of the country; after which followed the sacrifice of the ancient liberties of the natives. Dumourier no sooner obtained an influence over the credulity of the people of Brabant than he levied from them five or six millions sterling,

by which he calculated that his army of 120,000 men might be supported nine or ten months longer. Brabant, till the *joyeuse entrée* of Dumourier, had always enjoyed such a considerable portion of liberty as to be deemed a free country.

The time was, when the smallest acquisition of territory gained by the French nation would have thrown England into a ferment. When the Duke de Choiseul, in the zenith of his power, seized upon Avignon, insignificant as was the acquisition, it threw Europe into a flame, which would have burst out into a war, if the Duke had not prevented it by restoring that city to the Pope, its lawful sovereign. His Lordship said, he remembered very well what were the opinions of the leading men in Parliament at the time when the French undertook to make a conquest of the island of Corsica ; many of them were persuaded, that, to prevent such a measure, it was the interest of England to arm, and run all the hazard of a war. By annexing Savoy to this empire, the French shewed that aggrandisement was their object. This conduct in the Netherlands equally shewed that they intended to rule these provinces as their own : the consequences to England, of the Flemish ports being in the hands of France, must, to the most ordinary statesman, appear to be to the last degree alarming. It was now two hundred and fifty years since Philip de Comines, writing upon the subject of the fall of the House of Burgundy in the time of Louis XI., and the transfer of the ports of Boulogne, &c., to France, observed that this transfer ought to alarm England, and that unless the consequences were timely prevented, they must prove fatal to the liberties and independence of that kingdom, and of all Europe. If gentlemen would look at the map of Brabant, they would see that the port of Antwerp on the Scheldt, lying opposite our coast, and almost in a direct line with the river Thames, would, in the hands of the French, prove destructive to the British trade, and deprive England of the dominion of the narrow seas. It would do more ; for Brabant, situated as it was respecting Holland, would, in the hands of the French, enable them to rule that Republic at their pleasure, or pull it down if they pleased, or govern it under its present form by means of their Ambassadors at the Hague, who would leave the Dutch only the shadow of liberty and independence. Queen Eliza-

both opposed sometimes France, sometimes Spain ; but her soundest policy was raising up a new power, the Republic of Holland, which might be a check upon either, and a barrier to England against both : this was truly sound policy ; and it would be shewing a total disregard for our own interest if we were to leave that State exposed to the danger of being swallowed up by France. Holland and England were natural allies : it was true they had sometimes quarrelled ; but they had seen their error, and ought to unite in jealousy and detestation of the people who had made them enemies. Before he should sit down, his Lordship said, there were two points on which he would take the liberty of saying a few words : one was the recall of Lord Gower ; the other the dismissal of Monsf. Chauvelin ; both of which measures had his most hearty approbation. Before the noble Lord was recalled the Government of France was at an end ; her Constitution, which had been called a model of free government, was dissolved in a few days, and there was no saying when it would be replaced by another. During the interval it would not have been decent for a British Ambassador to remain at Paris, particularly as the Ministers of the other powers had withdrawn from that city. As to Monsf. Chauvelin, he must say it looked rather suspicious that so punctilious a nation as France should leave an Ambassador here after ours had been recalled : he believed it was generally understood that Ambassadors were at best but privileged or honourable spies ; and he was inclined to think that only for the purpose of having a spy upon our public conduct, and an agent that might forward their seditious views, that the Executive Council kept Monsf. Chauvelin here : for his part, he was very glad that he was gone, and he wished that he had been ordered away sooner, for there were occasions in which resident Ambassadors might do great mischief. In the year 1712, when it was known that England was going to make a separate peace, the then Imperial Ambassador at our Court delivered in a strong memorial to our Minister, and caused it to be printed the next day in the public newspapers ; for which he was ordered to quit the Court and kingdom. The removal of Ambassadors did not necessarily prevent negotiation ; for the diplomatic art had devised means for enabling two nations, though actually at war, to treat through the medium of



a neutral power : when a war was declared, the belligerent nations recalled their Ministers ; but did it follow that the war was therefore to be eternal ? War was certainly a calamity, but not so great a one as a hollow peace. Whether it broke out a little sooner or a little later, was of little consequence, if it broke out at all. In the present instance we might expect a speedy and a happy termination of it ; for all Europe would be on our side. He was aware that confederacies did not always act well together ; but the reason was obvious, the parties composing it rarely had a common interest, or would hold out till the general interest required a general peace. In the present contest the case was different ; the Emperor would, no doubt, strain every nerve to recover his beautiful provinces in the Netherlands ; the King of Prussia would feel it necessary to recover the reputation which was the main prop of the Prussian monarchy ; Holland would have to contend for her very existence : Italy was interested in taking from France Savoy, and restoring it to the King of Sardinia ; and Spain and Portugal must see the danger to their Governments, if the French arms and French principles were not timely checked. In such a state of affairs England had every reason to look for a general, a powerful, and a cordial co-operation of the greatest part of Europe against France. For these reasons, he said, he was determined to give his most hearty support to the address moved by the right honourable gentleman.

Earl WYCOMBE said, that he conceived it to be his most indispensable duty to use every argument in his power to avert from his country so grievous a calamity as that of entering into a war ; a calamity of such a nature, as to leave only a doubt as to the extent of ills which might probably result from it ; and he conjured the House not to agree to the proposed address till they had well considered the consequences. This country, his Lordship said, was in no danger whatever, being equally secured by its insular situation, its internal resources, and the strong attachment of the people to the constitution ; he conceived, therefore, that we had no ground for alarm on the first point mentioned in the message from His Majesty.

As to the second point, the security of our allies, his Lordship said, it was impossible we could be told that Prussia had been attacked by France, and of course this part of the message

must relate to Holland. If the navigation of the Scheldt was the subject of dispute, it appeared to him to be a matter of indifference to this country ; except that in one view it would be of great advantage to our commerce and manufactures, by opening a new channel in the best and most convenient situation for sending our manufactures into all the continent of Europe. From several circumstances, it would be idle and impolitic for the Dutch themselves to meditate war, and they seem by no means disposed to do so : shall we then urge them to resistance, and menace France with war ?

With regard to the next point in His Majesty's message, the propagation of French principles, he thought it by no means safe to go to war against principles. If the principles alluded to were levelling principles, they should be met with contempt, but he by no means reprobated all the French principles.—Great stress had been laid on the cruelties perpetrated in France ; but he could not think that they were a proper cause of war : In his opinion, these cruelties had all originated in the infamous expedition of the Duke of Brunswick, which might be called a fraternity of kings for the purpose of imposing despotism on all Europe.

Another ground taken by Ministers, he said, was the necessity of preserving the balance of power in Europe—or, the system of Europe : but he could not see why this country should be ready, upon all occasions, to go to war for the benefit of other nations. This system he looked upon to be no more than a political fiction, a cover for any interference that caprice might dictate.

The next thing to which he wished to call the attention of the House, was, the means of carrying on the war. When the present supposed accumulation, of which Ministers boasted, was exhausted, they must have recourse to new taxes ; and if there was no absolute necessity for war, why burden the people to maintain a war, of the issue of which no judgement could be formed, and the relative situation of France to this country was such, that the connection of this country with her should not, he thought, be put to unnecessary hazard. The war might be carried on for some time without any additional duties ; but when our resources were exhausted, taxes must follow, accompanied by the murmurs, if not execrations, of the

people; and he hoped we would not fall into an error with respect to the finances of France, for it had undoubtedly resources which would be sufficient at least for some time. The death of the King of France had been pathetically lamented by Ministers, but they never attempted to interfere, and while they professed peace, used every haughty irritating provocation to war. Upon the whole, he could view the war in no other light than as a revival of the system of extirpation that was the basis of the late American war.

His Lordship then adverted to the precarious situation of Ireland; and stated that, and several other reasons, which induced him to deprecate the involving this country in a war with France, and to give his negative to the motion for the address.

Mr. WHITBREAD, jun. said, he should preface the few observations he thought it proper to submit to the consideration of the House, by declaring his abhorrence of the atrocious deed lately committed in France: it would stand one of the foremost in the black catalogue of crimes which history had to record; it would remain a foul stain upon the national character of the people amongst whom it had been perpetrated. But in tracing the source of this and other barbarities which had been committed in France, he must differ with the right honourable gentleman and the noble Lord who had moved and seconded the address, and coincide with the noble Lord who had just spoken. He denied that such had been the *necessary* consequences of the French revolution, or that such horrors were the *necessary* associates of republicanism. To the conduct of the Powers combined against the liberties of France, to the sanguinary manifestoes of the Duke of Brunswick, he conceived all these murders were to be attributed. Such manifestoes, he said, bore the stamp and character of those barbarians, both ancient and modern, to whom to conquer and to destroy were the same, rather than of the gallant and enlightened leader of the armies of two enlightened Princes of Europe, at the close of the eighteenth century. The spirit of Attila was discernible in them, who describing the manner in which himself made war, in the emphatical words recorded by Mr. Gibbon, had said, "Where Attila's horse sets his foot, the grass never grows." In modern times, he knew no parallel to the de-

vastation threatened, but in the eloquent account given by a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) of the descent of Hyder Ali into the Carnatic. Both leaders appeared equally to have decreed to make the countries possessed by the incorrigible and predestinated criminals opposed to them, a memorable example to mankind; both seemed equally to have resolved to place perpetual desolation as a barrier between themselves and those against whom the ties which hold the moral elements of the world together, they deemed no protection. It was a melancholy consideration to humanity, that in endeavouring to turn our eyes from the scenes of blood in France, we could find no relief in contemplating the mild and Christian virtues of the Powers leagued against her. It had been said, in palliation of their manifestoes, that there had been no intention of carrying the letter of them into execution. Upon the folly of threatening that which we cannot, or do not intend to execute, he should make no comment: but what pledge had we that this assertion was true? The only victims which had fallen into the hands of the combined Powers had been treated with exemplary cruelty and injustice. If on the one hand he saw Louis XVI. confined in the prison of the Temple, on the other he saw Mr. la Fayette, and his unfortunate companions, lingering in the cells of a German fortress. To a man of any firmness and resolution, the election would not be difficult to make between the catastrophe, and final momentary sufferings of Louis, and the slow consuming horrors in which La Fayette dragged on his existence. He repeated his abhorrence of the execution of Louis XVI., and having done so, said, that in deliberating on the subsequent parts of the address, he should, as much as possible, divest himself of those feelings which such an act was calculated to excite; because if ever there was a crisis in which Members of Parliament ought to deliberate coolly and dispassionately, it certainly was the present, when, as it appeared to him, a matter of no less moment was to be debated, than whether we were to have peace or war. He professed himself an advocate for peace; for peace, as connected with the prosperity of the country; for the prosperity of the country, as connected with its honour: for, the honour and prosperity of any country he considered inseparable.

The House was then to consider whether war was justifiable upon any grounds stated in the papers upon the table, and whether Ministers had done their utmost to avert that calamity. To both these he gave a decided negative; and before he adverted to the grounds stated in the papers, he should say something as to the real cause of war, as he conceived it would at length appear to be, if war were undertaken. This was no less than the total overthrow of the new system of government existing in France; for no other reason could Ministers have refused to acknowledge the Republic. They had admitted of non-official communications; this was an acknowledgement of the power residing in those persons with whom they thus communicated; but they refused to acknowledge the right of those persons to the exercise of the power with which they were invested. This was securing the possibility of joining with the combined Powers, whenever a convenient opportunity might offer, for the overthrow of the new system. He deprecated such an attempt, as contrary to the rights of nations. No country had a right to interfere with the internal arrangements adopted by another. *The national will was supreme in every country*; and that alone could constitute, alter, or modify forms of government. Could any man doubt that the nation willed a republic in France? If we attempted to interfere with the disposition of the national will, let us recollect upon what grounds the *title of the King of England stood—upon the will of the nation*; and one of the most despotic sovereigns in Europe, the Empress of Russia, owed her elevation to the *supposed expression of the national will* at the revolution in 1762. She possessed the throne upon no other footing; and *what form of government soever any nation willed for itself, such it had the right to adopt*.

He now came to the first stated ground of complaint of this country against France—the decree of Nov. 19; which decree he did not in itself defend; but he contended that the explanation which the French had been disposed to give of that decree, was such as to take away all well-founded apprehensions of any injury designed to this country, and certainly would not justify us in going to war. The next object stated, was the aggrandizement of France, which was likely to endanger the balance of Europe. Upon the subject of the balance of Eu

rope, which now appeared to be a matter of such signal importance, he begged to call the attention of the House ; and to the general conduct of His Majesty's Ministers in their endeavours to maintain that balance. At the time that the despotic Powers had formed a combination against France, which it was not conceivable that she could resist ; when it appeared that that country was to be over-run, and to become an easy prey to the Duke of Brunswick, no apprehensions were entertained on account of the balance of power ; the same supineness had been visible when the Empress of Russia, in the course of the last summer, had taken possession of Poland : but now that the French were victorious, and had defeated their enemies, combined to crush them, the balance of power was in danger ! But the aggrandizement of France was dangerous, as connected with the principles she propagated ! He begged to know whether this apprehension was not equally well founded, when applied to the case of Russia ? He conceived the principles of despotism propagated by the sword of the one, as dangerous to the general security of Europe, as the licentiousness propagated by the sword of the other. With regard to the request urged on the part of the British Government, that the French should withdraw their troops within their own territory, in order to pave the way to any negociation with us, he thought such a demand the height of insolence. France had been attacked ; she had successfully repelled that attack, and gained possession of the territory of her adversary, and had a right to maintain that possession, at least till the conclusion of the war, to enable her to make advantageous terms for herself. We had forced her to an anticipation of her designs on the subject of Brabant. She had declared her intention not to add the Low Countries to her own territories, but to suffer the Belgians to erect themselves into an independent sovereignty. He was not now inquiring whether it were justifiable to detach provinces from the Power to which they belonged, and to give them independence ; but the idea was not new ; he recollected to have heard a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) recommend it to the present Minister as an object worthy to establish his reputation as a great Statesman, to rescue the provinces of Bessarabia, Moldavia, and Wallachia, from the tyranny of the Grand Signior, and to erect them into an independent fede-

rated State, under the denomination of the Circle of the Danube. He did not conceive that Ministers entertained any real apprehensions on the subject of the aggrandizement of France, as endangering the security of Europe, to which their inattention had been so notorious, nor did he find any justifiable cause for war on this ground.

The only remaining consideration was upon the subject of the exclusive navigation of the Scheldt. He had before stated an opinion on the subject of the natural right of the inhabitants of the banks of rivers to the free use and enjoyment of the waters of such rivers. He begged to restate his opinion; it was comprised in the words of that part of the decree of the National Convention, which says, "That the course of rivers  
" is the common property of all the countries watered by them;  
" that a nation cannot, without injustice, pretend to the right  
" of occupying the channel of a river, to prevent the neigh-  
" bouring nations who occupy the upper banks from enjoying  
" the same advantage." He did not go the length of that decree in saying that "such right was revocable at every mo-  
" ment, and in spite of all convention;" for he held that the faith of treaties was paramount, and must be abided by. The right he contended for was antecedent to all treaty, that natural right, the nearer to which all treaties came, the nearer they were to the principles of justice. But if he were to say whence the French drew what were now deemed their extravagant notions on this point, he should look to the subsequent productions of a right honourable Member of that House, (Mr. Burke) who had said, in a celebrated speech, that "The benefits of  
" Heaven to any community ought never to be connected with  
" political arrangements, or made to depend on the personal  
" conduct of princes; in which the mistake or error, or neglect or distress, or passion of a moment, on either side, may  
" bring famine on millions, and ruin an innocent nation,  
" perhaps, for ages. The means of the subsistence of man-  
" kind should be as immutable as the laws of nature, let power  
" and dominion take what course they may.—The use of this  
" river has indeed been given to the Rajah, &c.—*This use of  
" the water, which ought to have no more connection than clouds  
" and rains and sunshine with the politics of the Rajah, the Na-  
" job, or the Company, is expressly contrived as a means of en-*

“ forcing demands and arrears of tribute. This horrid and  
 “ unnatural instrument of extortion had been a distinguishing  
 “ feature in the enormities of the Carnatic politics.”

Thus had Mr. Burke thought, and thus did think the National Convention; but he owned that he did not go the whole length of their doctrines. A hard necessity, indeed, he should conceive it for Great Britain, to be forced to go to war, to maintain to the Dutch the exclusive navigation of the Scheldt; but he had never said that he was against supporting the faith of treaties, where the *casus fœderis* was clearly defined. But was it, in this instance, a new and unexercised right of nature for which it was contended? Certainly not. Antwerp was a monument of the exercise of that right by her inhabitants; and he was free to say, that it would give him joy to see the commerce of that once flourishing city restored; for the exclusive navigation of the Scheldt had been “ established  
 “ by force, and consented to by weakness.” But a necessary preliminary to these investigations, would have been some precise requisition of the Dutch for the stipulated assistance of her ally. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had avowed that no such demand had been made; and if the House were to judge of the dispositions of the States General by their own declarations, he believed it would be found that they did not think it worth their while to go to war for the maintenance of this right. He alluded to the proclamation for a general fast put forth by the States General on January 10, in which they declare, that they are then *at peace*, and that the strict neutrality they observed, had *hitherto protected them from aggression*. A manifest token that they did not consider the free navigation of the Scheldt, as asserted by the French, a reason for going to war. If then we did go to war on that ground, we should force our allies into it, and not ourselves be involved in it by the terms of our alliance.

Mr. Whitbread said, that having gone through the matter contained in the papers, as far as they related to the probability of peace or war, he could find no justification of the conduct of Administration. He thought the maintenance of peace, consistently with the dignity, honour, and interests of this country, was perfectly in the power of Ministers; but their conduct and words denoted war. He had still, however, a



hope of peace remaining ; that hope was founded on the knowledge he had of the character of His Majesty's present servants. He knew that they had the faculty of enlarging or reducing objects precisely to the form in which they wished to consider them. That at one time, the little fortress of Oczakow had deranged their balance of power in Europe ; that at another the whole kingdom of Poland had been thrown into the scale without making a vibration in their political beam. He knew that they had never advanced too far to recede ; that they had never threatened too much to retract. Their sentiments might again change. This, he confessed, was a desperate hope, because it was connected with the reflection, that the reins of Government were in the hands of men so insufficient, so versatile, and so weak. He concluded with saying, that he could not give his assent to the address, as it then stood.

Mr. ANSTRUTHER viewed the late atrocious act with the utmost horror, and heartily joined in that part of the address which offered their condolence to His Majesty on the mournful occasion. In adverting to the conduct of France, he said, he could not help remarking the difference betwixt that conduct when under a monarchy crippled as it was after the King's acceptance of the new Constitution, and what it now was : they had attacked the imperial cities, and had taken Brabant into their hands. He then mentioned their communication with societies in this country, and their dangerous principles ; and said, that Monsieur Chauvelin, alluding to those very societies, had stated in an official paper, that the French had received the English as brothers. As to the decree of the 19th of November, which he reprobated in the strongest terms, it is said to have been explained ; but what is the explanation ?—Totally unsatisfactory and inconsistent with the decree itself. It is in fact a declaration against every existing Government on the earth. With respect to the business of the Scheldt, he protested in the strongest manner against the application of general principles against the faith of treaties. He was glad, however, that the grounds of war had been stated on so broad a basis. In fact the French now say, that having overturned their own old Government, they are not bound by any of its treaties ; a principle totally inconsistent with every notion of justice, and with the laws and faith of nations.

Mr. Anstruther then adverted to the infinite danger to be apprehended from the propagation of French principles ; but we are asked, said he, whether we can combat principles by the sword ; most certainly, if they are propagated by the sword, they must be stopped by the sword. Honourable gentlemen had charged on the Duke of Brunswick the origin of the murders and massacres in France : but was it their enemies whom the French had murdered ? No, it was their brethren. Supposing wars to be carried on with cruelty, there can be no comparison betwixt the two ; besides the manifesto was never intended to be put in execution. He said, he looked on the conduct of France as expressly hostile to this country. They had interfered in our internal policy with respect to the alien bill ; and in his opinion they ought to league with us in opposition to them. If liberty were of the nature held out by them, he would fly, he said, from the altar of liberty ; and he concluded with heartily concurring in the motion for the address.

Mr. FOX said, that although some words had fallen from the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) which might lead him to think that war was not absolutely determined upon, yet the general tenor and impression of his speech was such as to induce him to enter somewhat at large into the subject—as to convince him that there never was a time when the duty, not merely to his immediate constituents, but to the whole people of Great Britain, of whom the Members of that House were individually and collectively the virtual representatives, more imperiously called upon him, and upon every man, to speak out and declare his sentiments frankly and fairly. The misrepresentations and misconstructions of what he and those who thought as he did, had already said in the course of the present session, left him no room to doubt, that what he now must say, would be equally, and, perhaps, as successfully misrepresented and misconstrued. This only served to shew, that they were on a service of honour as well as danger ; but if misrepresentation and calumny were to deter him from delivering opinions because they might be unpopular, from deprecating a war with France, as an evil to be avoided by every possible means consistent with the honour and safety of us and

our allies, he should basely betray his trust to his constituents and his country.

The right honourable gentleman had introduced the several grounds of dispute with France, ably and accurately; but the reasons for going to war, he did not mean to say for arming, had not been very accurately treated. The crimes, the murders, and the massacres that had been committed in France, he did not view with less horror, he did not consider as less atrocious than those who made them the perpetual theme of their declamation, although he put them entirely out of the question in the present debate. The condemnation and execution of the King he pronounced an act as disgraceful as any that history recorded; and whatever opinions he might at any time have expressed in private conversation, he had expressed none certainly in that House, on the justice of bringing Kings to trial; revenge being unjustifiable, and punishment useless, where it could not operate either by way of prevention or example, he did not view with less detestation the injustice and inhumanity that had been committed towards that unhappy monarch. Not only were the rules of criminal justice, rules that more than any other ought to be strictly observed; violated with respect to him; not only was he tried and condemned, without any existing law to which he was personally amenable, and even contrary to laws that did actually exist; but the degrading circumstances of his imprisonment, the unnecessary and insulting asperity with which he had been treated, the total want of republican magnanimity in the whole transaction, (for even in that House it could be no offence to say, that there might be such a thing as magnanimity in a Republic) added every aggravation to the inhumanity and injustice. Now having said all this as the genuine expression of his feelings and his reason, he saw neither propriety nor wisdom in that House passing judgement on any act committed in another nation, which had no direct reference to us. The general maxim of policy always was, that the crimes perpetrated in one independent State were not cognizable by another. Need he remind the House of our former conduct in this respect? Had we not treated, had we not formed alliances with Portugal and with Spain, at the very time when these kingdoms were disgraced and polluted by the most shocking and barbarous acts.

of superstition and cruelty, of racks, torture, and burning, under the abominable tyranny of the inquisition? Did we ever make these outrages against reason and humanity a pretext for war? Did we ever inquire how the Princes with whom we had relative interests either obtained or exercised their power? Why then were the enormities of the French in their own country held up as a cause of war? Much of these enormities had been attributed to the attack of the combined powers; but this he neither considered as an excuse, nor would argue as a palliation. If they dreaded, or had felt an attack, to retaliate on their fellow citizens, however much suspected, was a proceeding which justice disclaimed; and he had flattered himself, that when men were disclaiming old, and professing to adopt new principles, those of persecution and revenge would be the first that they would discard. No man felt greater horror at the proceedings of the combined powers than he did. A combination more dangerous to the tranquillity of Europe and the liberties of mankind had never been formed. It had been said, that Austria was not the aggressor in the war with France. Had those, who said so, seen the treaty of Pilnitz? Let them look at that treaty, take the golden rule of supposing themselves in the situation of the French, and judging of others as they would wish to be judged, and say whether or not the French had been the aggressors. But whatever might be thought of Austria, was the King of Prussia attacked by France? Were his territories menaced, or his allies insulted? Had he not been completely the aggressor, he would have called upon us as his allies for succour; no such call had ever been heard of; a sufficient proof, if any proof were wanting, that he never considered himself but as engaging in an offensive war. What were the principles of these combined powers? They saw a new form of Government establishing in France, and they agreed to invade the kingdom, to mould its Government according to their own caprice, or to restore the despotism which the French had overthrown. Was it for the safety of English liberty, (liberty that might still be mentioned without offence) that if we should make any change in our form of Government, or Constitution, and that change should be disagreeable to foreign powers, they should be considered as having a right to combine, and replace what we had rejected, or give us any

thing else in its room by fire and sword? He would not go over the atrocious manifestoes that preceded, or followed the march of the combined armies; there was not a man in the House, or at least but one (Mr. Burke) who would attempt to defend them. But these it seemed were not to be executed—he hoped they were not; but the only security he knew of was, that those who issued them had not the means. What was their conduct? Their mode of raising money was at least as bad as that with which the French were reproached. The French confiscated property where they carried their arms; the Duke of Brunswick took what he wanted, and gave papers for it in the name of the unfortunate monarch whom he pretended to assist. He contracted debts in the name of the French King, which he knew the French King might never have the means or the inclination to pay—and this swindling trick, for which any man in this country would have been convicted and punished, he continued after he had begun his retreat. Yet we stood by and saw all this without alarm, certainly without interference. We perceived no danger in the success of despotism; but the moment the opposite cause became successful, our fears were extreme.

He should now shew, that all the topics to which he had adverted, were introduced into the debate to blind the judgment, by rousing the passions, and were none of them the just grounds of war. These grounds were three: the danger of Holland; the decree of the French Convention of Nov. 19th; and the general danger to Europe from the progress of the French arms. With respect to Holland, the conduct of Ministers afforded a fresh proof of their dissimulation. They could not state that the Dutch had called upon us to fulfil the terms of our alliance. They were obliged to confess, that no such requisition had been made; but added, that they knew the Dutch were very much disposed to make it. Whatever might be the words of the treaty, we were bound in honour, by virtue of that treaty, to protect the Dutch, if they called upon us to do so, but neither by honour nor the treaty till then. The conduct of the Dutch was very unfortunate upon this occasion. In the order for a general fast by the states, it was expressly said, “that their neutrality seemed to put them

“ in security amidst surrounding armies, and had hitherto effectively protected them from molestation.”

This he by no means construed into giving up the opening of the Scheldt on their part; but it pretty clearly shewed, that they were not disposed to make it the cause of a war, unless forced to do so by us. But France had broke faith with the Dutch; was this a cause for us to go to war? How long was it since we considered a circumstance tending to diminish the good understanding between France and Holland, as a misfortune to this country! The plain state of the matter was, that we were bound to save Holland from war, or by war if called upon; and that to force the Dutch into a war at so much peril to them, which they saw and dreaded, was not to fulfil, but to abuse the treaty. Hence he complained of the disingenuous conduct of Ministers, in imputing that to the Dutch, which the Dutch wished to avoid.

The decree of the 19th of November he considered as an insult; and the explanation of the executive Council as no adequate satisfaction; but the explanation shewed that the French were not disposed to insist upon that decree, and that they were inclined to peace; and then our Ministers, with haughtiness unexampled, told them, they had insulted us, but refused to tell them the nature of the satisfaction that we required. It was said we must have security; and he was ready to admit that neither a disavowal by the executive Council of France, nor a tacit repeal by the Convention, on the intimation of an unacknowledged agent, of a decree, which they might renew the day after they repealed it, would be a sufficient security. But at least we ought to tell them what we meant by security, for it was the extreme of arrogance to complain of insult without deigning to explain what reparation we required: and he feared an indefinite term was here employed, not for the purpose of obtaining, but of precluding satisfaction. Next it was said, they must withdraw their troops from the Austrian Netherlands, before we could be satisfied. Were we then come to that pitch of insolence as to say to France, “ you have conquered part of an enemy’s territory who made war upon you, we will not interfere to make peace, but we require you to abandon the advantages you have gained, while he is preparing to attack you anew.” Was this the

neutrality we meant to hold out to France? “ If you are invaded and beaten, we will be quiet spectators; but if you hurt your enemy, if you enter his territory, we declare against you.” If the invasion of the Netherlands was what now alarmed us, and that it ought to alarm us if the result was to make the country an appendage to France, there could be no doubt, we ought to have interposed to prevent it in the very first instance; for it was the natural consequence which every man foresaw of a war between France and Austria.—The French now said, they would evacuate the country at the conclusion of the war, and when its liberties were established. Was this sufficient? By no means: but we ought to tell them what we would deem sufficient, instead of saying to them, as we were now saying, “ this is an aggravation, this is nothing, “ and this is insufficient.” That war was unjust which told not an enemy the ground of provocation, and the measure of atonement; it was as impolitic as unjust, for without the object of contest, clearly and definitively stated, what opening could there be for treating of peace? Before going to war with France, surely the people, who must pay and must suffer, ought to be informed on what object they were to fix their hopes for its honourable termination. After five or six years war, the French might agree to evacuate the Netherlands as the price of peace; was it clear that they would not do so now, if we would condescend to propose it in intelligible terms? Surely in such an alternative, the experiment was worth trying: but then we had no security against the French principles.—What security would they be able to give us after a war which they could not give now?

With respect to the general danger of Europe, the same arguments applied, and to the same extent. To the general situation and security of Europe, we had been so scandalously inattentive; we had seen the entire conquest of Poland, and the invasion of France, with such marked indifference, that it would be difficult now to take it up with the grace of sincerity; but even this would be better provided for, by proposing terms before going to war.

He had thus shewn that none of the professed causes were grounds for going to war. What then remained but the internal government of France, always disavowed, but ever kept

in mind, and constantly mentioned? The destruction of that Government was the avowed object of the combined powers whom it was hoped we were to join; and we could not join them heartily if our object were one thing while theirs was another, for in that case the party whose object was first obtained might naturally be expected to make separate terms, and there could be no cordiality nor confidence. To this then we came at last, that we were ashamed to own engaging to aid the restoration of despotism, and collusively sought pretexts in the Scheldt and the Netherlands. Such would be the real cause of the war, if war we were to have—a war, which he trusted, he should soon see as generally execrated, as it was now thought to be popular. He knew, that for this wish, he should be represented as holding up the internal Government of France as an object for imitation. He thought the present state of Government in France nothing less; but he maintained as a principle inviolable, that the Government of every independent state was to be settled by those who were to live under it, and not by foreign force. The conduct of the French in the Netherlands, was the same with such a war, as he was now deprecating, and might be an omen of its success. It was a war of pikes and bayonets, against opinions; it was the tyranny of giving liberty by compulsion; it was an attempt to introduce a system among a people by force, which the more it was forced upon them, the more they abhorred. The French appeared less moderate, from pretending to be more so, than other nations; by overturning the ancient Government, and imposing theories of their own, on a people who disliked them, while they pretended to liberate, instead of using their right of conquest. But was this such a crime in the eyes of Europe? As was said of the woman caught in adultery, which of the Courts, would that of London or Berlin cast the first stone? The states of Brabant, they were told, had, *pacta Conventa*, a legal and free Government of their own. But were the States free under the House of Austria, under Joseph, Leopold, or Francis? O yes! for when Dumourier was triumphantly entering Brussels, and the Austrian Governors making their escape at a postern, they sent back a declaration to the States, restoring their Magna Charta, the *Joyeuse Entrée*, which had been the perpetual subject of dispute with



their Sovereign, and which all their remonstrances could never obtain before. This was the Government that acted with such honour to its subjects, and put the French to shame. He feared that if they were to examine the conduct of foreign powers, in point of honour and good faith, they must be compelled to speak less civilly of them than policy would dictate. Why, then, had he touched upon it? Because the conduct of France was perpetually introduced to inflame and delude, and it was his duty to dispel the delusion, by shewing that it was not more exceptionable than that of its neighbours.

In all decisions on peace or war, it was important to consider what we might lose, and what we could gain. On the one hand, extension of territory was neither expected nor eligible. On the other, although he feared not the threat of the French marine Minister, would any man say that our ally might not suffer; that the events of war might not produce a change in the internal state of Holland, and in the situation of the Stadtholder, too afflicting for him to anticipate. In weighing the probable danger, every consideration ought to be put into the scale. Was the state of Ireland such as to make war desirable? That was a subject which had been said by some honourable gentlemen to be too delicate to be touched upon; but he approved not of that delicacy which taught men to shut their eyes to danger. The state of Ireland he was not afraid to mention. He thought it both promising and alarming; promising, because the Government of this country had forced the Government of that to an acknowledgement of the undoubted rights of a great majority of the people of Ireland, after having in a former session treated their humble petition with contempt, and in the summer endeavoured to stir up the Protestants against the Catholics; alarming, because the gross misconduct of Administration had brought the Government and the Legislature into contempt in the eyes of the people. Here he called on his right honourable friend (Mr. Windham) who had given the aid of his great talents, as Secretary in Ireland, to an administration with which he had the honour of being connected, on the same principle on which he had declared, that he would support Ministers when they had done mischief enough to be formidable, when they brought the country into a situation sufficiently perilous, to accept of

the same situation again, and avert the danger which they had created. He hoped the plan to be pursued would be conciliatory, that concession to the claims of the people would be deemed wisdom, and the time of danger the fit time for reform; in short, in every thing contrary to the declarations of the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) here.

The people of this country loved their Constitution. They had experienced its benefits; they were attached to it from habit. Why put their love to any unnecessary test? That love by being tried could not be made greater, nor would the fresh burdens and taxes, which war must occasion, more endear it to their affection. If there were any danger from French principles, to go to war without necessity, was to fight for their propagation.

On these principles as reprobated in the proposed address he would freely give his opinion. It was not the principles that were bad and to be reprobated, but the abuse of them. From the abuse, not the principles, had flowed all the evils that afflicted France. The use of the word equality by the French was deemed highly objectionable. When taken as they meant it, nothing was more innocent; for what did they say, "all men are equal in respect of their rights." To this he assented; all men had equal rights, equal rights to unequal things; one man to a shilling, another to a thousand pounds; one man to a cottage, another to a palace; but the right in both was the same; an equal right of enjoying, an equal right of inheriting or acquiring, and of possessing inheritance or acquisition.

The effect of the proposed address was to condemn, not the abuse of those principles, (and the French had much abused them) but the principles themselves. To this he could not assent, for they were the principles on which all just and equitable Government was founded. He had already differed sufficiently with a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) on this subject, not to wish to provoke any fresh difference; but even against so great an authority he must say, that the people are the sovereigns in every State; that they have a right to change the form of their government, and a right to cashier their Governors for misconduct, as the people of this country cashiered James II., not by a Parliament, or any regular form

known to the constitution, but by a Convention speaking the sense of the People ; that Convention produced a Parliament and a King. They elected William to a vacant throne, not only setting aside James, whom they had justly cashiered for misconduct, but his innocent son. Again, they elected the House of Brunswick, not individually, but by dynasty ; and that dynasty to continue while the terms and conditions on which it was elected are fulfilled, and no longer. He could not admit the right to do all this but by acknowledging the sovereignty of the people as paramount to all other laws. But it was said, that although we had once exercised this power, we had in the very act of exercising it, renounced it for ever.— We had neither renounced it, nor, if we had been so disposed, was such a renunciation in our power. We elected first an individual, then a dynasty, and lastly passed an act of Parliament, in the reign of Queen Anne, declaring it to be the right of the people of this realm to do so again without even assigning a reason. If there were any persons among us, who doubted the superior wisdom of our monarchical form of Government, their error was owing to those who changed its strong and irrefragable foundation in the right and choice of the people, to a more flimsy ground of title. Those who proposed repelling opinions by force, the example of the French in the Netherlands, might teach the impotence of power to repel, or to introduce. But how was a war to operate in keeping opinions supposed dangerous out of this country ? It was not surely meant to beat the French out of their own opinions ; and opinions were not like commodities, the importation of which from France, war would prevent. War, it was to be lamented, was a passion inherent in the nature of man ; and it was curious to observe, what at various periods had been the various pretences. In ancient times wars were made for conquest. To these succeeded wars for religion, and the opinions of Luther and of Calvin were attacked with all the fury of superstition and of power. The next pretext was commerce ; and it would probably be allowed that no nation that made war for commerce ever found the object accomplished on concluding peace. Now we were to make war about opinions ; what was this but recurring again to an exploded cause, for a war about principles in religion, was as

much a war about opinions, as a war about principles in politics. In the excellent set of papers alluded to by the right honourable gentleman, (Mr. Pitt) and which he had no doubt had been liberally distributed to the gentlemen who had lately got so many new lights on the French affairs, the atheistical speech of Dupont in the Convention was quoted. Did they believe all the French to be atheists and unbelievers on account of that speech? If they did so believe, there would certainly be no reason to complain of them for want of faith. But admitting that the French were all atheists, were we going to war with them in order to propagate the Christian religion by means contrary to the precepts of Christ? The justifiable grounds of war were insult, injury, or danger. For the first, satisfaction; for the second, reparation; for the third, security was the object. Each of these, too, was the proper object of negotiation, which ought ever to precede war, except in case of an attack actually commenced. How had we negotiated? Not in any public or sufficient form, a mode which he suspected, and lamented, by his proposing it had been prevented. A noble Lord (Beauchamp) had said that he thought it his duty not to conceal his opinions on so important an occasion, by absence or by silence; formerly the noble Lord did not think absence so great a crime. During the nine unfortunate years that he had maintained the same political connections with him (Mr. Fox) the noble Lord's attendance had not been very assiduous; and he rejoiced to hear that the noble Lord meant now to compensate for past omissions by future diligence. When the triple league was formed to check the ambition of Louis the Fourteenth, the contracting parties did not deal so rigorously by him, as we were now told it was essential to the peace of Europe that we should deal by the French. They never told Louis that he must renounce all his conquests in order to obtain peace. But then it was said to be our duty to hate the French for the part they took in the American war. He had heard of a duty to love, but a duty to hate was new to him. That duty, however, ought to direct our hatred to the old Government of France; not to the new, which had no hand in the provocation. Unfortunately the new French Government was admitted to be the successor of the old in nothing but its faults and its offences. It was a successor to be hated and to

war against ; but it was not a successor to be negotiated with. He feared, however, that war would be the result, and from war, apprehending greater evils than he durst name, he should have shrunk from his duty if he had not endeavoured to obtain an exposition of the distinct causes : of all wars, he dreaded that the most which had no definite object, because of such a war it was impossible to see the end. Our war with America had a definite object, an unjust one indeed, but still definite ; and after wading through years on years of expence and blood, after exhausting invectives and terms of contempt on the vagrant Congress, one Adams, one Washington, &c. &c., we were compelled at last to treat with this very Congress, and those very men. The Americans, to the honour of their character, committed no such horrid acts as had disgraced the French ; but we were as liberal of our obloquy to the former then as to the latter now. If we did but know for what we were to fight, we might look forward with confidence, and exert ourselves with unanimity ; but while kept thus in the dark, how many might there be who would believe that we were fighting the battles of despotism. To undeceive those who might fall into this unhappy delusion, it would be no derogation from the dignity of office to grant an explanation. If the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) would but yet consider—if he would but save the country from a war—above all, a war of opinion, however inconsistent with his former declarations his measures might be, he would gladly consent to give him a general indemnity for the whole, and even a vote of thanks. Let not the fatal opinion go abroad, that Kings had an interest different from that of their subjects ; that between those who had property and those who had none there was not a common cause and common feeling.

He knew that he himself should now be represented the partizan of France, as he had been formerly represented the partizan of America. He was no stranger to the industry with which these and other calumnies were circulated against him, and therefore he was not surprised ; but he really was surprised to find that he could not walk the streets without hearing whispers that he and some of his friends had been engaged in improper correspondence with persons in France. If there were any foundation for such a charge, the source of the informa-

tion could be mentioned ; if it were true, it was capable of proof. If any man believed this, he called upon him to state the reasons of his belief. If any man had proofs, he challenged him to produce them. But to what was this owing ? The People had been told by their representatives in Parliament that they were surrounded with dangers, and had been shewn none. They were, therefore, full of suspicion, and prompt of belief. All this had a material tendency to impede freedom of discussion, for men would speak with reserve, or not speak at all, under the terror of calumny. But he found by a letter in a newspaper, from Mr. Law, that he lived in a town where a set of men associated, and calling themselves gentlemen, (Mr. Reeves's Association, Crown and Anchor) not only received anonymous letters reflecting on individuals, but corresponded with the writers of such letters, and even sometimes transmitted their slanders to the Secretary of State. He could not be much surprised at any aspersion on his character, knowing this ; and therefore he hoped the House would give him the credit of being innocent till an open charge was made ; and that if any man heard improper correspondence imputed to him in private, he would believe that he heard a falsehood, which he who circulated it in secret durst not speak in public.

Mr. WINDHAM replied to Mr. Fox. He agreed that in all probability France had no wish at this moment to go to war with this country, as they were not yet ready to do so ; their object seemed to be to take all Europe in detail, and we might be reserved for the last. It had been said, that no specific object had been held out for which this country should go to war ; nor in his opinion could it always happen, that, previous to entering upon a war, the precise object which was to lead to its termination should be distinctly known. At present we go to war for the security of this country, to attain which would be the object of the war, though it might be impossible to say how or when that was to be obtained : in the same way, when a person is attacked by a ruffian, the object is to escape, though it may be uncertain by what means that may be accomplished. In his opinion, from the present declared dispositions of the French, war was inevitable, and the only choice left us was the time, and he thought it by no means prudent to

wait till they were ready to attack us. He conceived the French to be actuated by as great a spirit of conquest at present as they had ever been. War might, no doubt, occasion some discontents in this country; but impressed, as he was, that war was absolutely inevitable, neither that consideration, nor the calamities necessarily attending it, and which were always much to be regretted, bore at all upon his mind. His opinion of the views of the French, founded upon the whole tenor of their conduct for the last three or four years, could hardly be changed by any argument; and from thence conceiving it impossible that war could be avoided, he thought it should be undertaken when it might probably be most effectually carried on; negotiation might, no doubt, be tried, but he had no hope that it would do any good.

Mr. Windham then proceeded to state strongly his ideas of the great danger of the propagation of French principles, and agreed entirely with his honourable friend (Mr. Anstruther) that opinions and principles, supported and propagated by arms, behoved to be opposed by arms. In his idea, the conquest of Britain by Louis XVI. would by no means have been a calamity equal to the propagation of French principles. In the one case, our persons might perhaps have been safe; all morality, order, and religion, would be totally overthrown in the other. This would be a war *pro aris & focis* to the greatest extent.

In respect to the principle of interfering in the affairs of other countries, particular rules must govern particular cases. In Queen Elizabeth's time this country interfered in the affairs of Holland, and other instances had occurred; and France itself was at present interfering in every country into which she can force admission.

With respect to the Duke of Brunswick's expedition, which had been called the cause of despots, he confessed he had wished them success, from the belief that the evil which that expedition was undertaken to remove was greater than any which could be apprehended from its success. He said, he could by no means join with his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox) in his approbation of French principles, considered abstractedly, for they appeared to him as false in theory as in practice. As to the term equality and equal rights, in his opinion, it was cu-

rious to see a writer on that subject struggling with a definition of equality — only perplexing the matter farther by calling it equality of rights, and obliged to give a commentary as large as a pamphlet before he could so define it as to make it capable either of assent or dissent. Upon what had been said as to the sovereignty of the people, he should at present enter no farther into the discussion than to enter his protest against the doctrine that the people, or a majority, have a right to make and unmake governments according to their caprice; though he admitted that it was a general subject of intricate and important discussion.

France had an hatred to this country, Mr. Windham observed, not on account of ancient rivalry, but because our Constitution is a perpetual contradiction to their Government. Who, he asked, ever expected advantages from war? But great as is the evil of war, he observed, there must even be something greater, namely, the occasion of it. As to the idea that nothing but extirpation could effect the most desirable object of the war, that was viewing the matter in too dreadful a light: it would surely not be surprising if a people, who had of late so often changed their opinion, should be brought again to alter it, and to adopt sentiments more consistent with the good order of all governments, and the general tranquillity of Europe, as well as more conducive to their own happiness.

Lord WILLIAM RUSSELL said, that, although he had felt the greatest indignation and horror at the late proceedings in France, and most sincerely commiserated the fate of the late unfortunate King of that country, yet, notwithstanding, he had heard nothing to convince him of the necessity or policy of a war, or to induce him to give his vote for the address.

The question was then put on the motion for the address, and carried without a division.—The House adjourned.

*Monday, 4th February.*

A number of private petitions were brought up and read.

Read a second time the Mutiny bill.

Major MAITLAND gave notice that he meant, on an early day, to submit to the House a motion relative to the long depending impeachment of Mr. Hastings. He certainly had no intention to throw the smallest reflection on the proceedings



of that House, on the conduct of its Managers, or on the House of Lords; but, from the unjustifiable length of time which the proceedings on that impeachment had already taken up, he wished to submit to the consideration of the House some proposition which, by a conference with the Lords, or in some other way, might lead to facilitate the termination of the business, and in which he hoped to meet the unanimous concurrence of the House.

Mr. GREY moved, "that an humble address be presented to His Majesty, that he would be graciously pleased to give directions that there be laid before this House the copy of a declaration made by Lord Auckland, His Majesty's Ambassador at the Hague, to the States General of the United Provinces, on the 13th of November, 1792." Ordered.

Also a similar address, "requesting His Majesty to give directions that there be laid before this House the copy of a memorial presented by Lord Auckland to the States General on the 5th of January, 1793." Ordered.

Lord PARKER reported that His Majesty had been waited upon with the address of the House of last Friday, and had graciously signified his approbation of the same.

Mr. Ramsay, from the East-India House, presented the various papers moved for by Mr. Secretary Dundas, as to the debts of the East-India Company and their assets, &c., which were ordered to be printed.

The order of the day having been read, that the House should resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House to consider farther of the supply, the Speaker left the chair, and Mr. Hobart took his seat at the table.

Lord ARDEN moved, "that an additional number of 20,000 men be granted to His Majesty for the sea service for the year 1793, including a proportionable number of marines."

Sir JOHN JERVIS said, he by no means meant to make any opposition to the motion; but that he thought it his duty to submit to the House the great hardship which the officers in the navy laboured under, from its being generally twelve months at least after receiving their commissions before they could procure their subsistence money, by which means they were laid under the necessity of borrowing money at five per

cent. interest, and of insuring their lives at a high premium, which often led them into great difficulties, and seldom left them much to themselves when their pay came to be received. This was an evil and inconvenience which every gentleman would admit to be of the highest importance, and he hoped some means of remedying it would be adopted.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, it could not be expected that he should be ready at the moment to say any thing specific upon this subject. On the one hand, it was absolutely necessary to fix checks for the purpose of preventing frauds on Government; but, consistent with that object, it was certainly extremely desirable, and was very much his wish, that every accommodation should be afforded, in this respect, to the gentlemen both in the navy and army. He said he would undoubtedly make an immediate inquiry into the business, and so far as it appeared to him that this object could be forwarded, either by his exertions in an official capacity, or by the regulation of an act of Parliament, it should have his utmost support.

The motion for granting an additional number of seamen was then put and carried.

Lord ARDEN then moved, “that a sum, not exceeding 4l. per man per month, be granted to His Majesty for thirteen months.” Carried.

The House being then resumed, the report was ordered to be received to-morrow, and the Committee of Supply adjourned till Wednesday.

A new writ was ordered to be issued for the election of a burgess for the borough of Newport, in the room of Lord Viscount Melbourne, who has accepted the office of Steward of the three Chiltern Hundreds.

Mr. FOX gave notice, that on Thursday next he would bring forward a motion on the state of this country, relative to the impending war.

The House adjourned.

*Tuesday, 5th February.*

This being a ballot day, and there not being present an hundred Members to make a House, an adjournment took place.

Memorial presented by Lord Auckland, His Britannic Majesty's Minister at the Hague, to Their High Mightinesses the States General.

High and Mighty Lords,

THE under-signed Ambassador Extraordinary and Plenipotentiary of His Britannic Majesty takes the earliest opportunity, in consequence of the express orders of the King, to lay before your High Mightinesses copies of all the papers which have been exchanged, since the 27th of December last to the 20th of this month, between Lord Grenville, Secretary of State to His Majesty, and M. Chauvelin.

The King, High and Mighty Lords, is firmly persuaded, that the sentiments and principles expressed by Great Britain are perfectly conformable to those which animate your Republic, and that your High Mightinesses are disposed fully to concur in the measures which the present crisis demands, and which are a necessary consequence of these sentiments and principles.

The circumstances which have led to this crisis are too recent, and the conduct of the King too well known, for the under-signed to have occasion here to enter into any long detail. It is not quite four years since certain miscreants, assuming the name of philosophers, have presumed to think themselves capable of establishing a new system of civil society. In order to realize this dream, the offspring of vanity, it became necessary for them to overturn and destroy all established notions of subordination, of morals, and of religion, which had hitherto constituted the security, the happiness, and the consolation of mankind. These destructive projects have but too well succeeded: but the effects of the new system which they wished to introduce have only served to demonstrate the folly and wickedness of its authors. The events that have since so rapidly followed, surpass, in atrocity, all that has hitherto sullied the page of history. Property, liberty, security, and even life itself, have been the sport of this unbridled phrenzy of the passions, of this spirit of rapine, of hatred, and of the most cruel and unnatural ambition. The annals of mankind cannot present a period in which, in so short a space, so many crimes have been committed, so many misfortunes produced, and so many tears shed: in a word, at this very moment these horrors appear to have attained their utmost height.

During all this time, the King, surrounded by his People, who enjoyed, under the favour of Providence, a degree of prosperity without example, could not behold the misfortunes of others without the strongest emotions of pity and indigna-

tion ; but, faithful to his principles, His Majesty has never permitted himself to interfere in the internal affairs of a foreign nation ; he has never departed from that system of neutrality which he had adopted.

This conduct (which the King has seen with satisfaction to have been equally observed by Your High Mightinesses), the good faith of which all Europe has acknowledged, and which ought to have been respected on many other accounts, has not been sufficient to secure His Majesty, his people, and the Republic, from the most dangerous, and the most criminal-conspiracies.

For several months past, projects of ambition and aggrandizement, dangerous to the tranquillity and the security of all Europe, have been openly avowed ; attempts have been made to spread throughout England and this country maxims subversive of all social order, and they have not scrupled to give to these detestable attempts the name of a Revolutionary Power. Ancient and solemn treaties, guaranteed by the King, have been infringed, and the rights and territory of the Republic have been violated. His Majesty has therefore, in his wisdom, judged it necessary to make preparations proportioned to the nature of the circumstances. The King has consulted his Parliament ; and the measures which His Majesty had thought fit to take, have been received with the most lively and unanimous approbation of a People who abhor anarchy and irreligion, who love their King, and will maintain their constitution.

Such, High and Mighty Lords, are the motives of a conduct, the wisdom and equity of which have hitherto insured to the King your concert and co-operation.

His Majesty, in all that he has done, has ever been vigilant in the support of the rights and the security of the United Provinces. The Declaration which the under-signed had the honour to deliver to Your High Mightinesses on the 13th of November last, and the arrival of a small squadron destined to protect the coasts of the Republic, until their own maritime force should be assembled, are strong proofs of this fact. Your High Mightinesses have witnessed this disposition of the King, in every thing which His Majesty has hitherto done—You will not be less sensible of it in the measures which are now preparing. In consequence His Majesty is persuaded that he shall continue to experience, on the part of Your High Mightinesses, a perfect conformity of principles and conduct. This conformity can alone give to the united efforts of the two countries, the energy necessary for their common-defence ; to oppose a barrier to those evils with which Europe is menaced, and to preserve, against every attempt, the security, the tranquillity, and the independence of a State, the happiness of which Your High Mightinesses ensure by the wisdom and firmness of your Government.

Done at the Hague, the 25th Jan. 1793.

*Tuesday, 5th, to Saturday, 9th February, inclusive.*

There not being, on any of those days, an hundred Members present at four o'clock, to make a ballot, an adjournment of course took place.

*Monday, 11th February.*

Mr. M. A. TAYLOR gave notice, that on Monday next he would make a motion respecting the barracks erecting in the interior parts of this kingdom.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS brought up the following Message from His Majesty, which was read by the Speaker :

G. R.

*HIS Majesty thinks proper to acquaint the House of Commons, that the Assembly now exercising the powers of Government in France, have, without previous notice, directed acts of hostility to be committed against the persons and property of His Majesty's subjects, in breach of the law of nations, and of the most positive stipulations of treaty; and have since, on the most groundless pretences, actually declared war against His Majesty and the United Provinces. Under the circumstances of this wanton and unprovoked aggression, His Majesty has taken the necessary steps to maintain the honour of his crown, and to vindicate the rights of his people; and His Majesty relies with confidence on the firm and effectual support of the House of Commons, and on the zealous exertions of a brave and loyal people, in prosecuting a just and necessary war; and in endeavouring, under the blessing of Providence, to oppose an effectual barrier to the farther progress of a system which strikes at the security and peace of all independent nations, and is pursued in open defiance of every principle of moderation, good faith, humanity, and justice.*

*In a cause of such general concern, His Majesty has every reason to hope for the cordial co-operation of those Powers who are united with His Majesty by the ties of alliance, or who feel an interest in preventing the extension of anarchy and confusion, and in contributing to the security and tranquillity of Europe.*

G. R.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS then moved, that the House should enter on the consideration of His Majesty's message to-morrow. Agreed to.

Lord PARKER attended to inform the House, that His Majesty had, in conformity to the requisition of that House, ordered certain papers (moved for by Mr. Grey) to be laid before the House.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS brought up two Memorials from Lord Auckland to the States General. Ordered to lie on the table.

Sir GEORGE YONGE brought up the accounts from the War Office, which he moved to refer to the Committee of Supply on Friday. Ordered to lie on the table.

Mr. MARTIN begged leave to call the attention of the House to the situation of the French laity and clergy who had taken refuge in this country, and had no other support than that which they derived from the humanity of the nation. He understood that the fund for their relief was nearly exhausted, and that the one which was destined for the subsistence of the clergy in particular, would be completely expended by the end of the next month, unless some means should in the interim be devised for raising a fresh supply. It had been suggested to him, that to this end, it would be a very proper measure to move the House to address His Majesty to grant a brief for making collections in the different churches of the kingdom. He was informed, that in England and Wales there were about 9200 places of worship belonging to the establishment, and about 700 belonging to Dissenters; in all near 10,000; it was not too much, he hoped, to expect, that by means of the King's brief 40 shillings might be raised in each; and thus a considerable supply might be procured, which would suffice for some time for the support of the unfortunate men in whose favour he was speaking, or enable Government to settle them in such places as it might be deemed most expedient. Perhaps it might be adviseable to address the Crown to grant them some temporary relief. For his part, all he wanted was, to fulfil the offices of humanity to fellow creatures in distress; and he would very willingly resign the task he had undertaken into the hands of others, who were better qualified than he was to perform it with most effect. But if no one else would take up the business, he gave notice that he would, on a future day, make a motion on the subject, which he had then suggested to the House.

Mr. WILBERFORCE said that, with the leave of the House, he would postpone till Friday the motion which he intended to submit to their consideration on the subject of the slave trade.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that from the importance of the information communicated to the House by His Majesty's message, gentlemen behoved to feel how very material it was that nothing should be allowed to prevent the immediate consideration of it ; he therefore moved, " That the ballot for a  
" Committee to try the merits of the election for Pontefract,  
" which stood for to-morrow, should be postponed till Thurs-  
" day ; and that all the other ballots should be put off for two  
" days beyond the times for which they were now fixed ," and they were postponed accordingly.

Mr. HOBART brought up the report of the Committee of Supply, " That an additional number of 20,000 men be  
" granted to His Majesty for the sea service for the year 1793,  
" including a proportionable number of marines, in addition  
" to the 25,000 already voted ;" and " That 4l. per man per  
" month be granted to His Majesty for 13 months." On motion of Lord Arden, the number of additional marines was specified to be 4000, and the resolutions, with this amendment, were agreed to.

Mr. LAMBTON stated, that it was in some shape a matter of public notoriety, that a treaty had been entered into in January last between Great Britain, the Emperor, and the King of Prussia ; at least it would appear that this was the case, from authority, which probably might be thought of no great authenticity or respectability (the debates and proceedings in the French Convention). He wished to know from gentlemen on the other side of the House, whether such a treaty really existed ; because if it did, he conceived it to be so intimately connected with the subject of His Majesty's message, that the House could, with no great degree of propriety, enter upon the consideration of the message, till they should be in possession of it. If, therefore, such a treaty existed, he would certainly move that a copy of it should be laid upon the table.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, that it was surely an unusual proposition to ask for the production of a treaty betwixt two foreign States ; that it might be unsafe to do so ; and that, at

all events, it was a subject which the House ought not to take up, without sufficient previous notice, or determine upon, without the most mature consideration.

Mr. GREY said, that this appeared to him the most proper, indeed the only proper time to make a motion for this purpose. That if such a treaty as had been mentioned had in fact taken place, it appeared to him absolutely necessary that it should be laid before the House previous to their entering upon the consideration of His Majesty's message; of course the motion could not be put off consistently with the object of his honourable friend. He reprobated the idea of its being unsafe to comply with the motion at the present moment.

Mr. DUNDAS said, he had not spoke any thing about safety, but that he conceived it to be a new proposition to ask for the production of a treaty between two foreign powers. If, however, he was to consider what the honourable gentleman (Mr. Lambton) had said, as a motion, he should be prepared to answer him when he should bring forward the motion.

Mr. GREY said, that surely either he or the right honourable Secretary had totally misunderstood his honourable friend. The treaty he had spoke of was not a treaty between two foreign powers, but between Great Britain and the Emperor of Germany, and he certainly thought the production of it so extremely material that he hoped his honourable friend would press his motion. He highly disapproved of the general way of talking of gentlemen on the other side the House, and the confidence they had been in use to require from that House, without affording any just or necessary information on matters of the deepest importance to the interests of the nation; a confidence which he could not give without sacrificing his duty to his constituents.

Mr. RYDER stated, that he conceived there was no motion before the House.

Mr. LAMBTON then gave notice, that he would make his proposed motion to-morrow.

Major MAITLAND rose, to make his promised motion, respecting the trial of Mr. Hastings. He said, that in what he was about to say, nothing was farther from his thoughts, than to touch in the smallest degree upon the political character



of the unfortunate gentleman who was under impeachment ; or to arraign the justice of the House in sending him to trial, or to censure the conduct of the managers, to whom the Commons had committed the task of seeing it carried on ; but still he must state the extreme length of the trial, as a departure from that principle of the law of England, which required that judgement should be speedily given in all cases, so that punishment might soon overtake guilt, or an acquittal, speedily proclaim to the world the innocence of the accused. In the case of Mr. Hastings, the departure from this principle had been greater than had ever been known on any former occasion, and the trial protracted to a length unexampled and unprecedented in the annals of this or any kingdom. Mr. Hastings had now been nine years under accusation ; and nearly six years upon his trial. When it was considered, that this gentleman had returned home at an advanced period of life, and with a constitution impaired by the cares and fatigues necessarily attending upon the government of a great empire, and broken by a long residence in a sultry climate, he was sure that no man could, by any calculation, suppose that his life could have lasted six years from the day of his return ; and yet during a period to which no one could have presumed his life would have been protracted, had this unfortunate gentleman been kept upon his trial, bending every year before the House of Lords, and the justice of his country. The length of this trial had been noticed in a neighbouring nation, and no doubt would be used as an argument by those who were disaffected to the constitution of England, that constitution which was dear to every man of sense and wisdom in the nation ! From foreign or domestic foes he was anxious to take away every plausible argument against the constitution, that might be drawn from the delay of justice, occasioned by the unprecedented length of this trial ; and it was his sincere wish that some Member would undertake the task of devising some plan for expediting proceedings in criminal cases, and rendering it impossible that any other trial should ever be protracted in England to so astonishing a length. In turning over in his mind the unprecedented hardship thrown upon Mr. Hastings, by the unexampled length of his trial, he had resolved to move that a Committee should be appointed to consider of means for expediting the proceedings ; and he meant

in that Committee to move two specific propositions, one, that the Managers should be at liberty to carry on the trial, though the House of Commons should not be present in Westminster Hall. Of this he was aware that there was only one precedent, and that was in the impeachment of the Earl of Strafford: he was also aware that this mode was not without inconvenience and objection; for many cases might arise, in which the Managers might have occasion to withdraw and consult their principals, which could not be done without great delay, if the House was not at hand and sitting. But this objection would not appear very forcible to those who considered, that on the days of trial the attendance of Members in the House was generally very thin; a very blameable remissness was to be perceived in them, not only on that but on other occasions; and he, in common with others, had to lament, that notwithstanding the magnitude of the affairs that were pressing upon Parliament, it had been found impossible, during the last week, to make a House for the purpose of trying the merits of a contested election. The Parliament had now lived nearly to the middle of its career, and yet so great had been its remissness, that it had not yet decided upon the rights of many of the Members of that House to the seats which they actually occupied. This remissness was the more unpardonable, as it was the occasion of a delay of justice, which it was the spirit of the law of England should be administered with all due expedition.—The other specific proposition which he meant to move in the Committee was, that a conference might be proposed to the Lords, for the purpose of devising means for accelerating the conclusion of the trial. He concluded by moving for a Committee to consider of means for expediting the trial on the impeachment depending against Warren Hastings, Esq.

Mr. CHISWELL seconded the motion.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS agreed with the honourable gentleman that no blame was imputable to the House, who directed, the Lords who were to try, or the managers who conducted the impeachment. If it was true that the attendance of the House had not been so full as could be wished, it was also to be noted that from circumstances unavoidable the managers' box had not always been so full as at the commencement of the trial. The honourable gentleman had rather un-

necessarily alluded to remarks made upon the length of the trial elsewhere. The farce of Mr. Hastings's trial, he believed it was called in Brissot's report. With the author of that report he had neither friendship nor acquaintance; but he had seen that the trial was mentioned in it as a contrast to a more summary mode, which the reporter hoped would be adopted for trying Ministers. If any thing like that more summary suggested by his friend on the other side of the water, was what the honourable gentleman meant to recommend, he should be inclined to prefer the present mode of proceeding, slow as it was. But the honourable gentleman had given notice of his motion, before he was in possession of this great authority, and consequently it wanted not the aid of foreign artillery. If the Committee could devise any means of expediting the trial, he should not oppose, although he did not think that much could be done. He regretted the length of the trial, both as a hardship on the party accused, if innocent, and as a delay and injury to the justice of the country, if he was guilty. But it must be recollected, that the trial differed materially in its circumstances from any former trial by impeachment. It embraced the numerous transactions of many years; the materials of evidence were to be brought from a distant country; and they were ten times more voluminous than any before collected. With respect to providing against the occurrence of any similar case in future, that was already done by the act appointing a Court of Judicature for the trial of delinquencies committed in India. Of the two things intended by the honourable gentleman, that of empowering the managers to attend the trial without the House, he thought might be adopted, for he was not quite satisfied with the reasons on which it had been set aside on a former occasion; but a conference with the Lords, he did not conceive to be the proper mode of obtaining a closer attention to the trial, even if a closer attention could be given. The Lords in their judicial capacity might object to making any arrangement for expediting a trial with one of the parties.—Perhaps a better mode would be for the accusers and the accused to compare the state of their evidence, and the Lords would not object to any mode of saving time, on which both the parties were agreed. It would therefore be adviseable for the Committee to get such information from the managers and

the Counsel for Mr. Hastings, as could be given with propriety.

Major MAITLAND said he hoped the Committee would be an open one. To the right honourable gentleman's other remarks he would say, that, in wishing to provide against future trials running into such length, he did not look to offences committed in India only, but to offences prosecuted by impeachment in general. He had not made his motion, nor founded it upon any remarks coming from another country, but on the case itself. It was improper to allude to debates in another place: he had not the honour of Brissot's acquaintance; he should think it an honour if he had—he had never even seen him. But if the right honourable gentleman, or any of his friends, chose to bring into question what had passed elsewhere, in any place where an answer could be given, he would engage that they should be answered. As to the practice of foisting in the doctrines and conduct of the French, as wicked and damnable, upon all occasions, the right honourable gentleman and his friends had the consolation of having, by that and similar means, involved this country in a war, the most difficult and the most dangerous of any in which it was ever engaged.

Major SCOTT said, the defence of Mr. Hastings was closed to one article of four, which were all that now remained of the twenty originally voted, and the defence to the other three would not be longer than that to the first had been. The right honourable gentleman would recollect, that the East-India Judicature bill was passed two years before the impeachment, and that India delinquencies might still be prosecuted by impeachment.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, all the offences charged in the impeachment were prior in time to the bill, which was not retrospective, and delinquencies would not in future be prosecuted by impeachment, as there was now a special tribunal for trying them.

Sir WILLIAM YOUNG observed, that the injury to public justice, by the length of the trial, was not to be compared with the injury to the party accused, whether guilty or innocent; and he thanked the honourable gentleman for having made the motion.

The motion was agreed to, and Major Maitland, Mr. Chifwell, the Managers, and the gentlemen of the long robe, appointed as a Committee, where all Members who chose to attend were to have a voice.

Major MAITLAND wished to know whether or not there was any objection to laying before the House the dates of the orders for stopping the exportation of foreign corn to French ports, while it was allowed to be exported to other foreign ports.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that as the House had agreed to take His Majesty's message into consideration to-morrow, he should object to any discussion previous to that.

Major MAITLAND said, he recollected the right honourable gentleman giving the same sort of answer on a former occasion; but he had conveyed no intelligence to the House on these occasions. If the ships never had been stopped, and the Minister said so, he had got his answer; but as, by the message from His Majesty, it was conveyed to that House that there had been an unprovoked aggression on the part of France to this country, it was necessary the House should know the grounds for that communication from the Throne. If it should appear that we have been in the constant practice of supplying other powers, and at the same time stopping ships with the supplies of corn to France, perhaps then the act of aggression, as it was now called, would change its character in the opinion of many, and appear to be an aggression on our part, and that of the most dangerous tendency, as being contrary to the law of nations and the general tranquillity of Europe — points so much insisted upon in the message, and in every thing that had been observed by certain gentlemen on all occasions lately. If it should appear that His Majesty's Ministers caused these ships to be stopped for the purpose of producing this very act of aggression of which they now complained, then it would be necessary for that House to know the fact before they voted for an address upon that supposed aggression. He therefore moved, "That there be laid before the House copies of all orders given, on the part of our Government, for stopping the exportation of grain to France since the month of October, 1792."

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that if the honourable gentleman thought he could prove that what had been done by His Majesty's Ministers towards France fairly provoked the aggression against this country, he might bring the subject forward; but he submitted to the House whether this was the time for that purpose; and he submitted also to the honourable gentleman, whether he thought that, after the House had received a message from His Majesty, it was fair to ask it to come to a conclusion against a fact stated in that message, before the House should take the message itself into consideration. If the honourable gentleman could prove any thing that would lead the House to a conclusion that there had not been such an aggression, the day on which the message was to be debated would be the proper one for that purpose, and the House would have the advantage then of hearing the arguments of the honourable gentleman; but surely the House could not now proceed to the consideration of a point which belonged so immediately to the message from the Throne, and the discussion to which that would lead when under the consideration of that House.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, the right honourable gentleman did not seem to comprehend what the object was which his honourable friend had in view by his motion: he did not now call upon the House to alledge any thing, or to come to any conclusion; it had for its object only the ascertaining of a fact previous to the discussion of His Majesty's message, and which would be material in that discussion either one way or the other. If they were told that no ships had been stopped, as had been alledged, they would be satisfied, because there would be an end of that part of the question. But surely the Minister could not call on the House to vote for an address, or to vote any thing, without information on the subject. He did not know what sort of an address the Minister intended to propose to-morrow, but the probability was, that it would be what addresses in general are, a mere echo of the speech; if so, the House would be called upon to declare, that there has been an unprovoked aggression on the part of France towards this country, and that they have on groundless pretences taken measures of hostility against us. How was the House to know all this, unless the necessary previous information were granted?

There had been a rumour that a treaty had been concluded between the Emperor of Germany and this country : this was a material point to the discussion of the subject to which the attention of the House was to be called, and therefore he desired to know whether that was true, in order that he might be the more able to form an opinion for himself, whether these pretences, which were called groundless, were, in fair reasoning, to be deemed groundless : surely the House would not pronounce them so before they had any evidence of any kind upon the subject. If the Minister said " there is no such treaty," he should be satisfied upon that point. If there was a treaty, then he would say that the House, before they voted the pretences of the French groundless, should see that treaty. It was said that the French had proceeded against us without the smallest provocation : now this could never be known by the House, unless they were fairly informed whether the ships alluded to by his honourable friend had or had not been stopped under the circumstances he had mentioned ; if the ships had not been stopped, he should think himself bound to vote for that part of the address ; but if they had no evidence, they should not surely be so servile as to vote for what they had had no means of ascertaining to be true : he should, for these reasons, hope that the Ministers would reconsider the matter, and give some information to the House.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, that, with regard to the treaty to which gentlemen alluded, he had only to say, that as the notice was given to take this subject into consideration tomorrow, this was not the time to discuss the business. However, he wished to understand the honourable gentleman ; did he mean to say, or did he not, that he would object to proceeding upon the subject of His Majesty's message without the treaty in question ? If he meant to say, that, previous to the discussion of the message, he would move for the production of the treaty, then he should understand him perfectly, and be ready to meet him with regard to what had been supposed to be the duty of that House ; all that he could say was, that, when they came to consider His Majesty's message, and when the address came to be proposed to them, each Member of the House would have an opportunity of making such remarks as should occur to him, and if they should find that there were

not sufficient reasons for agreeing to the address as it might be moved, they would amend it as they should think fit; but they must be strong reasons indeed, when we were actually engaged in a war, that should prevent that House from agreeing to support His Majesty in the manner he proposed to the House. These points, however, he wished to be postponed to the time appointed for the consideration of the address. With regard to the subject altogether, he should say, that if the honourable gentleman felt the points to which they had alluded, and wished to persist in what they had asked, they might make their motions to-morrow; and they were not sure that the facts they should alledge would not be denied.

Mr. ROLLE said, that the orders for prohibiting the exportation of corn were highly justifiable, for the riots among certain classes of people had been occasioned solely by their alarm at the exportation, and not from any disaffection to the Constitution, in the defence of which they were now ready to shed the last drop of their blood.

Mr. GREY admitted that the honourable gentleman who spoke last had given a good description of the disposition of the people of this country; with regard to their attachment to the Constitution of this country he had no doubt, and that there was a loyalty and zeal among them, ready to be exercised, on every occasion, for the support of Government; but in order that it might be so, it was necessary that they should be convinced of the propriety of the measure they were to support. If we were to go to war with France, the people of this country should know that the French were the aggressors. But the honourable gentleman who spoke last had defended the prohibition, under the apprehension which the people had of a general scarcity. Was this the plea of the Ministers? Had they not suffered the exportation of corn to other countries at the time they had prohibited the exportation to France? This was a point to which he desired a clear and distinct answer, without which it would be ridiculous to proceed to an address to His Majesty's message, because the House would not have the necessary information. Was that to be the situation of that House? Were they to proceed blindly to any determination upon the suggestion of a Minister? Were they to call themselves judges of a fact of which they had no evidence be-



fore them? Were they to pledge the country to prosecute a war without knowing the points on which the necessity of it was alledged? Were the blood and treasure of the people to be expended at the will and caprice of a Minister? But it was said, they might move to-morrow for any thing they might think necessary. He wished to know whether it was consistent with common candour, whether it had ever been the practice of that House to withhold such information as the present motion sought to obtain. He believed that such an insult upon the House of Commons was new in the history of Parliament; it was such as they could not receive without abandoning their own honour. The fact of the prohibition was such as no man would deny. But he wished the House not to confound things. His question was this, and to which he expected a distinct answer, "Whether foreign corn, allowed to be exported to all other parts of the world, had been prohibited to France?"

Sir WILLIAM YOUNG said, he should object to any production of *ex parte* evidence. The House could not decide on the orders for stopping the exportation of corn to France, without having before them also the documents of the reasons that gave rise to those orders.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, he meant not to narrow the ground of the question: the orders for stopping the exportation of foreign corn to France, while the exportation of such corn to other countries was allowed, were given for the purpose of stopping the progress of an enemy in the act of preparation.

Major MAITLAND asked if the House was to understand that France was an enemy at the time these orders were given?

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS repeated, that the orders were "a measure of precaution to stop the progress of an enemy in the act of preparation against us."

The motion for copies of the orders was withdrawn.

Mr. GREY then requested, that as Ministers were in a humour so unusually communicative and explicit, they would have the goodness to inform the House whether or not any treaty with the Emperor and the King of Prussia had been concluded in January last.

No answer was given.—The House adjourned.

*Tuesday, 12th February.*

Major MAITLAND said, as he was informed that a large body of fencibles were now raising in Scotland, he was led to conceive, in concurrence with a report that had gone abroad, that this force was to supersede the plan of establishing a Scotch militia, of which the right honourable Secretary of State had given notice in that House. He rose, therefore, to ask if his suspicion was well founded; for in that case he should think it his duty, as a Member of Parliament, to bring forward a plan for the establishment of a militia in that part of the kingdom himself.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS, in answer, said, that it was indeed thought expedient at this time to raise a body of fencibles in Scotland; but that measure would by no means prevent or retard the militia establishment of which he had given notice.

Mr. LAMBTON said, that, to his former inquiries concerning a treaty which he had heard was concluded between His Majesty and the Emperor, a right honourable gentleman had replied with much loftiness, and had asked whether it was fit to ground any proceedings of that House upon a report of M. Brissot. He (Mr. Lambton) had, however, another report to mention, that a Member of that House had been sent away, on the 17th of December, invested with full powers to conclude a treaty, by which His Majesty was rendered a party to the treaty of Pilnitz. His question, on a former occasion, was intended to prevent the present motion; for he might either have been informed that the treaty did not exist, or, if it did exist, that it was not proper to be disclosed. It had been whispered to him, that, by this moment, he had got into a scrape. If by this it was meant that he should be exposed to hard language from gentlemen on the other side of the House, that he must bear with patience; but he could think it no scrape to be found performing his duty as a Member of Parliament; and his motion was of the more importance, that, if it really did exist, Lord Grenville's intimation, at the end of one of his letters to M. Chauvelin, that terms of accommodation might still be received from France, could not have been complied with, for we were under a prior engagement to the Emperor and the King of Prussia to make war upon that

country. He concluded by moving, " That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, praying that there may be laid before the House copies of such papers, or treaties of agreement, made between His Majesty's Ministers and the Emperor and the King of Prussia, if any such be existing."

Mr. GREY seconded the motion.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS declared, that when these papers had been called for on a former night he could not charge his memory with the knowledge of their existence, and therefore took the necessary time to make such inquiries as were proper. He could now state unequivocally that no such treaty, as was called for, existed. As to what had been stated by the honourable gentleman with respect to his conduct and manner, he declared that nothing was farther from his intention, on any occasion, than to give such offence as was attributed to him by Mr. Lambton. It was foreign to his disposition, and contrary to his nature. He was not present, he declared, on the former evening, at the beginning of the honourable gentleman's speech; but, having asked a friend who sat near him what was the object, he was told that a requisition had been made by the opposite side of the House to produce a treaty made between two foreign powers, the impossibility of which he conceived it unnecessary to explain.

Mr. LAMBTON admitted that the neighbour of Mr. Dundas, to whom he applied, had hearkened to his speech for the production of the treaty between this country and the two other powers with marked attention. It, however, so happened that Mr. Dundas was actually in his place during the whole time, while he had the honour of addressing the House. He confessed that when he had occasion to trouble Parliament he found himself in a state of trepidation, somewhat like a man *half seas over*, who naturally enough may *forget* what had occurred. In saying this he meant not to insinuate anything disrespectful, but rather to apologise for the right honourable Secretary. The answer, however, that no treaty existed, might have been given last night by the Chancellor of the Exchequer, if his memory did not also fail him; this motion might have been saved, and the House spared the trouble of hearing it.

Mr. BURKE declared he was sorry the treaty did not exist, for he should have considered it a measure of prudence, when this country was threatened with a war, to secure alliances to assist us.

Mr. FOX said, he rose for the purpose of paying a compliment to the right honourable gentleman, upon his candour in confessing, that upon the subject of the existence of a treaty, he did not chuse to trust to his own memory. There was a degree of caution which was very respectful to the House in that confession. To be sure it was a little unfortunate, that one of His Majesty's Secretaries of State should be ignorant whether or not a treaty had been entered into between His Majesty and another Power; but then it was great satisfaction to the House this day, that he was able to say to-day that there was no such treaty. He had in this instance displayed a degree of caution that might be set off against any want of attention in any other information that he may hereafter hastily give.

Major MAITLAND wished, that as such an explicit answer had been given to the former question, that the gentlemen would be so kind to tell the date of the first order prohibiting the exportation of corn to France.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that various directions had been given at various times, as the existing circumstances of the case required; but if it were in any shape material to the honourable gentleman for the support of any argument, to know the date of the first of these orders, he informed him it was the 17th of December, 1792.

The order of the day being read for taking His Majesty's message into consideration,

Mr. BUKKE said, he had a few observations to make on the resolution of the House yesterday, upon the trial of Mr. Hastings.

The SPEAKER reminded the right honourable Member that he was not in order, there being no question relative to the trial of Mr. Hastings.

His Majesty's message being read,

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that in proposing to the House an address in answer to His Majesty's message, he did not conceive that there could be any necessity, in the present instance, at least in one view of the subject, for troubling them much at

large. Whatever difference of opinion might formerly have existed with respect to subjects, on which, however, the great majority both of that House and the nation had coincided in sentiment, whatever doubts might be entertained as to the interest which this country had in the recent transactions on the Continent, whatever question might be made of the satisfaction to which this country was intitled, or whatever question might be made of the mode of conduct which had been pursued by Government, which lately had not been carried so far as to produce even a division; yet when the situation in which we now stood was considered, when those circumstances which had occurred to produce an alteration in the state of affairs since the last address, were taken into the account, he could not doubt but that there would be one unanimous sentiment and voice expressed on the present occasion. The question now was, not what degree of danger or insult we should find it necessary to repel, from a regard to our safety, or from a sense of honour; the question now was, not whether we should adopt in our measures a system of promptitude and vigour, or of tameness and procrastination; whether we should sacrifice every other consideration to the continuance of an uncertain and insecure peace? When war was declared, and the event no longer in our option, it remained only to be considered, whether we should prepare to meet it with a firm determination, and support His Majesty's Government with zeal and courage against every attack. War now was not only declared, but carried on at our very doors; a war which aimed at an object no less destructive than the total ruin of the freedom and independence of this country. In this situation of affairs, he would not do so much injustice to the Members of that House, whatever differences of opinion might formerly have existed, as to suppose there could be any but one decision, one fixed resolution, in this so urgent necessity, in this imminent and common danger, by the ardour and firmness of their support, to testify their loyalty to their Sovereign, their attachment to the constitution, and their sense of those inestimable blessings which they had so long enjoyed under its influence. Confident, however, as he was, that such would be their unanimous decision, that such would be their determined and unalterable resolution, he should not consider it now as altogether useless to take a

view of the situation of the country at the time of His Majesty's last message, of the circumstances which had preceded and accompanied it, and of the situation in which we now stood, in consequence of what had occurred during that interval.— When His Majesty, by his message, informed them, that in the present situation of affairs he conceived it indispensably necessary to make a farther augmentation of his forces, they had cheerfully concurred in that object, and returned in answer, what then was the feeling of the House, the expression of their affection and zeal, and their readiness to support His Majesty in those purposes, for which he had stated an augmentation of force necessary. They saw the justice of the alarm which was then entertained, and the propriety of affording that support which was required. He should shortly state the grounds upon which they had then given their concurrence. They considered that whatever temptations might have existed to this country from ancient enmity and rivalry, paltry motives indeed ! or whatever opportunity might have been afforded by the tumultuous and distracted state of France, or whatever sentiments might be excited by the transactions which had taken place in that nation, His Majesty had uniformly abstained from all interference in its internal government, and had maintained, with respect to it, on every occasion, the strictest and most inviolable neutrality. Such being his conduct towards France, he had a right on their part to expect a suitable return ; more especially, as this return had been expressly conditioned for by a compact, into which they entered, and by which they engaged to respect the rights of His Majesty and his allies, not to interfere in the government of any neutral country, and not to pursue any system of aggrandizement, or make any addition to their dominions, but to confine themselves, at the conclusion of the war, within their own territories. These conditions they had all grossly violated, and had adopted a system of ambitious and destructive policy, fatal to the peace and security of every Government, and which in its consequences had shaken Europe itself to its foundation. Their decree of the 19th of November, which had been so much talked of, offering fraternity and alliance to all people who wish to recover their liberty, was a decree not levelled against particular nations, but against every country where there was any form of

Government established ; a decree not hostile to individuals, but to the human race, which was calculated every where to sow the seeds of rebellion and civil contention, and to spread war from one end of Europe to the other ; from one end of the globe to the other. While they were bound to this country by the engagements which he had mentioned, they had shewed no intention to exempt it from the consequences of this decree. Nay a directly contrary opinion might be formed, and it might be supposed that this country was more particularly aimed at by this very decree, if we were to judge from the exultation with which they had received from different societies in England every address expressive of sedition and disloyalty, and of the eager desire which they had testified to encourage and cherish the growth of such sentiments. Not only had they shewed no inclination to fulfil their engagements, but had even put it out of their own power, by taking the first opportunity to make additions to their territory in contradiction to their own express stipulations.

By express resolutions for the destruction of the existing Government of all invaded countries, by the means of Jacobin societies, by orders given to their Generals, by the whole system adopted in this respect by the National Assembly, and by the actual connection of the whole country of Savoy, they had marked their determination to add to the dominions of France, and to provide means, through the medium of every new conquest, to carry their principles over Europe.

Their conduct was such, as in every instance had militated against the dearest and most valuable interests of this country. The next consideration was, that under all the provocations which had been sustained from France, provocations which, in ordinary times, and in different circumstances, could not have failed to have been regarded as acts of hostility, and which formerly, not even a delay of twenty-four hours would have been wanting to have treated as such, by commencing an immediate war of retaliation, His Majesty's Ministers had prudently and temperately advised all the means to be previously employed of obtaining reasonable satisfaction, before recourse should be had to extremities. Means had been taken to inform their agents, even though not accredited, of the grounds of jealousy and complaint on the part of this country, and an

• opportunity had been afforded through them of bringing forward any circumstances of explanation, or offering any terms of satisfaction. Whether the facts and explanations which these agents had brought forward were such as contained any proper satisfaction for the past, or could afford any reasonable assurance with respect to the future, every Member might judge from the inspection of the papers. He had already given it as his opinion, that if there was no other alternative than either to make a war or depart from our principles, rather than recede from our principles a war was preferable to a peace; because a peace, purchased upon such terms, must be uncertain, precarious, and liable to be continually interrupted by the repetition of fresh injuries and insults. War was preferable to such a peace, because it was a shorter and a surer way to that end which the House had undoubtedly in view as its ultimate object, a secure and lasting peace. What sort of peace must that be in which there was no security? Peace he regarded as desirable only so far as it was secure. If, said Mr. Pitt, you entertain a sense of the many blessings which you enjoy, if you value the continuance and safety of that commerce which is a source of so much opulence, if you wish to preserve and render permanent that high state of prosperity by which this country has for some years past been so eminently distinguished, you hazard all these advantages more, and are more likely to forfeit them, by submitting to a precarious and disgraceful peace, than by a timely and vigorous interposition of your arms.—By tameness and delay you suffer that evil which might now be checked to gain ground, and which, when it becomes indispensable to oppose, may perhaps be found irresistible. It had on former debates been alledged, that by going to war we expose our commerce? Is there, he would ask, any man so blind and irrational, who does not know that the inevitable consequence of every war must be much interruption and injury to commerce? But, because our commerce was exposed to suffer, was that a reason why we should never go to war? Was there no combination of circumstances, was there no situation in the affairs of Europe, such as to render it expedient to hazard for a time a part of our commercial interest? Was there no evil greater, and which a war might be necessary to avoid, than the partial inconvenience to which our commerce



was subjected, during the continuance of hostile operations? But he begged the pardon of the House for the digression into which he had been led—while he talked as if they were debating about the expediency of a war, war was actually declared: we were at this moment engaged in a war. He now came to state what had occurred since His Majesty's last message; and to notice those grounds which had served as a pretext for the declaration of war. When His Majesty had dismissed M. Chauvelin, what were then the hopes of peace? He was by no means sanguine in such hopes, and he had stated to the House that he then saw but little probability that a war could be avoided. Such then was his sentiment, because the explanations and conduct of the French agent were such as afforded him but little room to expect any terms which this country could either, consistently with honour or a regard to its safety, accept. Still, however, the last moment had been kept open to receive any satisfactory explanation which might be offered. But what, it might be asked, was to be the mode of receiving such explanation? When His Majesty had dismissed M. Chauvelin, as by the melancholy catastrophe of the French Monarch, the only character in which he had ever been acknowledged at the British Court had entirely ceased, eight days had been allowed him for his departure, and if during that period he had sent any more satisfactory explanation, still it would have been received. Had any disposition been testified to comply with the requisitions of Lord Grenville, still an opportunity was afforded of intimating this disposition. Thus had our Government pursued to the last a conciliatory system, and left every opening for accommodation, had the French been disposed to embrace it. M. Chauvelin, however, instantly quitted the country, without making any proposition. Another agent had succeeded, (M. Maret) who, on his arrival in this country, had notified himself as the Chargé d'Affaires on the part of the French Republic, but had never, during his residence in the kingdom, afforded the smallest communication. What was the next event which had succeeded? An embargo was laid on all the vessels and persons of His Majesty's subjects who were then in France. This embargo was to be considered as not only a symptom, but as an act of hostility. It certainly had taken place without any notice been given,

contrary to treaty, and against all the laws of nations. Here perhaps it might be said, that on account of their stopping certain ships loaded with corn for France, the Government of Great Britain might be under the same charge; to this point he should come presently. He believed if Government were chargeable with any thing, it might rather be, that they were even too slow in asserting the honour and vindicating the rights of this country. If he thought that His Majesty's Ministers wanted any justification, it would be for their forbearance, and not for their promptitude, since to the last moment they had testified a disposition to receive terms of accommodation, and left open the means of explanation. Notwithstanding this violent and outrageous act, such was the disposition to peace in His Majesty's Ministers, that the channels of communication, even after this period, were not shut; a most singular circumstance happened, which was the arrival of intelligence from His Majesty's Minister at the Hague, on the very day when the embargo became known here, that he had received an intimation from General Dumourier, that the General wished an interview, in order to see if it were yet possible to adjust the differences between the two countries, and to promote a general pacification. Instead of treating the embargo as an act of hostility, and forbearing from any communication, even after this aggression, His Majesty's Ministers, on the same day on which the embargo was made known to them, gave instructions to the Ambassador at the Hague, to enter into a communication with General Dumourier; and they did this with great satisfaction, on several accounts, first, because it might be done without committing the King's dignity; for the General of an army might, even in the very midst of war, without any recognition of his authority, open any negotiation of peace. But this sort of communication was desirable also, because, if successful, it would be attended with the most immediate effects, as its tendency was immediately to stop the progress of war, in the most practical, and perhaps, in the only practical way. No time was therefore lost in authorising the King's Minister at the Hague to proceed in the pursuit of so desirable an object, if it could be done in a safe and honourable mode, but not otherwise. But before the answer of Government could reach the Ambassador, or any means be adopted for car-

rying the object proposed into execution, war was declared, on the part of the French, against this country. If then we were to debate at all, we were to debate whether or not we were to repel those principles, which not only were inimical to this, and to every other Government, but which had been followed up in acts of hostility to this country. We were to debate whether or not we were to resist an aggression which had already been commenced ; but he would refer the House, not to observations of reasoning, but to the grounds which had been assigned by the Assembly themselves in their declaration of war. But first, he must again revert for a moment to the embargo. He then stated, that a detention of ships, if no ground of hostility has been given, is, in the first place, contrary to the law of nations. In the second place, there was an actual treaty between the two countries, providing for this very circumstance : and this treaty (if not set aside by our breach of it, which he should come to presently) expressly said, that, “ in case of a rupture, time shall be given for the removal of persons and effects.” He should now proceed to the declaration itself. It sets out with declaring, “ That the King of England has not ceased, especially since the revolution of the 10th of August, 1792, to give proofs of his being evil disposed towards the French nation, and of his attachment to the coalition of crowned heads.” Notwithstanding the assertion that His Majesty had not ceased to shew his evil dispositions towards the French nation, they have not attempted to shew any acts of hostility previous to the 10th of August ; nor in support of the charge of his attachment to the coalition of crowned heads, have they been able to alledge any fact, except his supposed accession to the treaty between the Emperor of Germany and the King of Prussia. This treaty has already, this evening, been the subject of conversation : it had then been mentioned, which he should now repeat, that the fact, thus alledged, was false, and entirely destitute of foundation ; and that no accession to any such treaty had ever taken place on the part of His Majesty. And not only had he entered into no such treaty, but no step had been taken, and no engagement formed on the part of our Government, to interfere in the internal affairs of France, or attempt to dictate to them any form of constitution.

He declared, that the whole of the interference of Great Britain had been (in consequence of French aggressions) with the general view of seeing whether it was possible, either by our own exertions, or in concert with any other Powers, to repress this French system of aggrandizement and aggression, with the view of seeing whether we could not re-establish the blessings of peace, whether we could not, either separately or jointly with other Powers, provide for the security of our own country, and the general security of Europe. The next charge brought by the National Assembly was, "That at the period  
" aforesaid, he ordered his Ambassador at Paris to withdraw,  
" because he would not acknowledge the Provisional Executive Council, created by the Legislative Assembly." It was hardly necessary for him to discuss a subject with which all were already so well acquainted. After the horrors of the 10th of August, which were paralleled but not eclipsed by those of the 2d of September, and the suspension of the French Monarch, to whom alone the Ambassador had been sent, it certainly became proper to recall him. He could not remain to treat with any Government to whom he was not accredited; and the propriety of his being recalled appear still more evident, when it was considered that it was probable that the banditti who had seized upon the Government would not long retain their power; and, in fact, in the course of a month, they had been obliged to yield to the interest of a different party, but of a description similar to their own. It was also to be remarked, that this circumstance of recalling the Ambassador had never till now been complained of as an act of hostility. When a Government was overturned, it became a fair question how long an interval should intervene till that Government should be acknowledged? and especially if that change of Government was accompanied with all the circumstances of tumult and distraction, it certainly became a matter of extreme hardship that a war should be the consequence to the nation which should refuse to acknowledge it in the first instance. The force of this reasoning became increased in the particular application, when it was considered, that France had not yet established any constitution of its own; that all, hitherto, was merely provisional and temporary; and that, however the present republican system might be confirmed by force, or change of opinion, a little

before, the voice of the nation, as far as its wish could be collected, had expressed itself in favour of a Monarchy. They proceeded to state, as farther grounds of their declaration of war, " That the Cabinet of St. James's has ceased, since the " same period, (the 10th of August) to correspond with the " French Ambassador at London, on pretext of the suspension " of the heretofore King of the French. That, since the opening of the National Convention, it has refused to resume the " usual correspondence between the two States, and to acknowledge the powers of this Convention. That it has refused " to acknowledge the Ambassador of the French Republic, although provided with letters of credit in its name."

M. Chauvelin had been received at this Court as Ambassador of the King, and in no other capacity or character. From the period of the suspension of the King, he, for some months, ceased to hold any communication with the Government here, or to act in any capacity; nor was it till the month of December that he had received his letter of credence to act here as the Ambassador of the French Republic. With respect to the charge of not having acknowledged the Convention, he confessed it to be true. When these letters of credence had been tendered, they were refused; but it was to be considered whether it would have been proper to have recognised them, after the repeated instances of offence, for which no compensation had been made, and of which, indeed, every fresh act presented not only a repetition but an aggravation. Indeed it would have been impossible at that period, without shewing a deviation from principle, and a tameness of disposition, to have recognised their authority, or accepted of the person who presented himself in the character of their Ambassador. At that very moment, it was to be recollected, they were embarked in the unjust and inhuman process which had terminated in the murder of their King—an event which had every where excited sentiments of the utmost horror and indignation! Would it have been becoming in our Government first to have acknowledged them at such a moment, when the power they had assumed was thus cruelly and unjustly exercised against that very authority which they usurped? But, whatever might be the feelings of abhorrence and indignation, which their conduct on this occasion could not fail to excite, he should by no means

hold out these feelings as a ground for hostility, nor should he ever wish to propose a war of vengeance. The catastrophe of the French Monarch, they ought all to feel deeply ; and, consistently with that impression, be led more firmly to resist those principles from which an event of so black and atrocious a nature had proceeded ; principles which, if not opposed, might be expected in their progress to lead to the commission of similar crimes ; but, notwithstanding Government had been obliged to decline all communication which tended to acknowledge the authority of the Convention, still, as he had said before, they had left open the means of accommodation ; nor could that line of conduct which they had pursued, be stated as affording any ground of hostility. He should now consider, collectively, some of the subsequent grounds which they had stated in their Declaration, which were expressed in the following articles :

“ That the Court of St. James’s has attempted to impede the different purchases of corn, arms, and other commodities ordered in England, either by French citizens or the agents of the Republic.

“ That it has caused to be stopped, several boats and ships loaded with grain for France, contrary to the treaty of 1786, while exportation to other foreign countries was free.

“ That in order still more effectually to obstruct the commercial operations of the Republic in England, it obtained an Act of Parliament prohibiting the circulation of assignats.

“ That in violation of the Fourth Article of the treaty of 1786, it obtained another Act, in the month of January last, which subjects all French citizens, residing in, or coming into England, to forms the most inquisitorial, vexatious, and dangerous.

“ That at the same time, and contrary to the 1st article of the peace of 1783, it granted protection and pecuniary aid not only to the emigrants, but even to the chiefs of the rebels, who have already fought against France ; that it has maintained with them a daily correspondence, evidently directed against the French Revolution : that it has also received the chiefs of the rebels of the French West-India Colonies.”

All these had been stated as provocations, but what sort of provocations? What, he would ask, was a provocation?—That we had indeed taken measures, which, if considered by themselves, and not as connected with the situation of affairs in which they were adopted, might perhaps be considered in the light of provocations he would allow; but if these measures were justified by the necessity of circumstances—if they were called for by a regard to our own safety and interests—they could only be viewed as temperate and moderate precautions. And in this light, these grounds, assigned in the declaration, could only be regarded as frivolous and unfounded pretences. With respect to the charge of having stopped supplies of grain and other commodities, intended for France, what could be more ridiculous than such a pretext? When there was reason to apprehend that France intended an attack upon the allies of this country, and against the country itself, upon which, at the same time, it depended for the stores and ammunitions necessary for carrying on hostilities, was it natural to suppose that they should furnish, from their own bosom, supplies to be turned against themselves and their allies? Could they be such children in understanding, could they be such traitors in principle, as to furnish to their enemies the means of hostility and the instruments of offence? What was the situation of France with respect to this country? Had they not given sufficient cause for jealousy of their hostile intentions? By their decree of the 19th of November, they had declared war against all Governments. They had possessed themselves of Flanders, and were there endeavouring to establish, by force, what they styled a system of freedom, while they actually menaced Holland with an invasion. Another ground which they had stated in their declaration as an act of hostility on the part of our Government was, that they had not suffered assignats to be circulated in this country. Truly, they had reason to be offended that we would not receive what was worth nothing; and that, by exercising an act which came completely within our own sovereignty with respect to the circulation of any foreign paper currency, we thus avoided a gigantic system of swindling. If such, indeed, were the pretences which they brought forward as grounds for a declaration of war, it was matter of wonder that, instead of a sheet of pa-

per, they did not occupy a volume, and proved that their ingenuity had been exhausted before their modesty had been at all affected. Of much the same nature was that other pretext, with respect to the passing of the Alien bill; a bill absolutely necessary for the safety of the country, for it shields us from the arrifice of the seditious, perhaps the dagger of the assassin. This bill they had held out as an infringement of the treaty of commerce. It could be no infringement of their treaty, as in the treaty itself, it was expressly declared, that nothing was to be considered as an infringement, unless, first, proper explanations had taken place. Secondly, it was not to be expected that any treaty could supersede the propriety of adopting new measures in a new situation of affairs. Such was the case, when an inundation of foreigners had poured into this country, under circumstances entirely different from those which were provided for by the bill. But who were those who complained of the severity of the regulations adopted by the Alien bill in this country? The very persons who, during the late transactions in their own country, had adopted restrictions of police ten times more severe, but of which our Government, however much its subjects might be affected, had never made the smallest complaint. The next ground, assigned in the declaration, was the armament which had taken place in this country.

“ That in the same spirit, without any provocation, and when all the maritime powers are at peace with England, the Cabinet of St. James’s has ordered a considerable naval armament, and an augmentation of the land forces.

“ That this armament was ordered at a moment when the English Minister was bitterly persecuting those who supported the principles of the French Revolution in England, and was employing all possible means, both in Parliament and out of it, to cover the French Republic with ignominy, and to draw upon it the execration of the English nation, and of all Europe.”

And, under what circumstances had the armament complained of taken place? At the period when the French, by their conduct with regard to the treaty of the Scheldt, shewed their intention to disregard the obligation of all treaties, when they had begun to propagate principles of universal war, and to discover views of unbounded conquest. Was it to be won-



dered that at such a time, we should think it necessary to take measures of precaution, and to oppose, with determination, the progress of principles, not only of so mischievous a tendency, but which, in their immediate consequences, threatened to be so fatal to ourselves and our allies? Indeed they now seemed rather to despair of these principles being so generally adopted, and attended with such striking and immediate success as they had at first fondly imagined. How little progress these principles had made in this country they might be sufficiently convinced by that spirit which had displayed itself of attachment to the Constitution, and those expressions of a firm determination to support it which had appeared from every quarter. If, indeed, they mean to attack us, because we do not like French principles, then would this indeed be that sort of war which had so often been alledged and deprecated on the other side of the House — a war against opinions. If they mean to attack us because we love our Constitution, then indeed it would be a war of extirpation; for not till the spirit of Englishmen was exterminated would their attachment to the Constitution be destroyed, and their generous efforts be slackened in its defence.

The next articles of complaint on the part of the French were,

“ That the object of this armament, intended against  
“ France, was not even disguised in the English Parliament.

“ That although the Provisional Executive Council of  
“ France has employed every measure for preserving peace  
“ and fraternity with the English nation, and has replied to  
“ calumnies and violation of treaties only by remonstrances,  
“ founded on the principles of justice, and expressed with the  
“ dignity of free men; the English Minister has persevered in  
“ his system of malevolence and hostility, continued the ar-  
“ maments, and sent a squadron to the Scheldt to disturb the  
“ operations of the French in Belgium.

“ That, on the news of the execution of Louis, he carried  
“ his outrages to the French Republic to such a length, as to  
“ order the Ambassador of France to quit the British territory  
“ within eight days.

“ That the King of England has manifested his attachment  
“ to the cause of that traitor, and his design of supporting it

“ by different hostile resolutions adopted in his Council, both  
 “ by nominating generals of his land army, and by applying  
 “ to Parliament for a considerable addition of land and sea  
 “ forces, and putting ships of war in commission.”

They clearly shew their enmity to that Constitution, by taking every opportunity to separate the King of England from the nation, and by addressing the people as distinct from the Government. Upon the point of their fraternity he did not wish to say much : he had no desire for their affection. To the people they offer fraternity, while they would rob them of that Constitution by which they are protected, and deprive them of the numerous blessings which they enjoy under its influence. In this case, the fraternal embraces resemble those of certain animals who embrace only to destroy. Another ground which they had assigned was the grief which had been expressed in the British Court at the fate of their unhappy Monarch.

Of all the reasons he ever heard for making war against another country, that of the French upon this occasion was the most extraordinary : they said they would make war on us, first, because we loved our own Constitution ; secondly, because we detested their proceedings ; and lastly, because we presumed to grieve at the death of their murdered King. Thus would they even destroy those principles of justice, and those sentiments of compassion, which led to reprobate their crimes, and to be afflicted at their cruelties. Thus would they deprive us of that last resource of humanity, to mourn over the misfortunes and sufferings of the victims of their injustice. If such was the case, it might be asked, in the emphatic words of the Roman writer, *Quis gemitus Populo Romano liber erit.* They would not only endeavour to destroy our political existence, and to deprive us of the privileges which we enjoyed as subjects of the most excellent Constitution, but they would eradicate our feelings as men ; they would make crimes of those sympathies which were excited by the distresses of our common nature ; they would repress our sighs and restrain our tears. Thus, except the specific fact, which was alledged as a ground of their declaration of war, namely, the accession of His Majesty to the treaty between Austria and Prussia, which had turned out to be entirely false and unfounded, or the aug-

mentation of our armament, a measure of precaution indispensably requisite for the safety of the country, and the protection of its allies, all the others were merely unjust, unfounded, absurd, and frivolous pretexts — pretexts which never could have been brought to justify a measure of which they were not previously strongly desirous, and which shewed that, instead of waiting for provocation, they only sought a pretence of aggression. The death of Louis, though it only affected the individual, was aimed against all sovereignty, and shewed their determination to carry into execution that intention, which they had so often professed, of exterminating all monarchy. As a consequence of that monstrous system of inconsistency which they pursued, even while they professed their desire to maintain a good understanding with this country, the Minister of the Marine had written a letter to the sea-port towns, ordering them to fit out privateers, for what purpose but the projected view of making depredations on our commerce? While they affected to complain of our armament, they had passed a decree to fit out fifty sail of the line—an armament which, however, it was to be observed, existed only in the decree. He feared that, by this long detail, he had wearied the patience of the House, and occupied more of their time than he at first intended. The pretexts, which he had been led to examine, alleged as grounds for the declaration of war, were of a nature that required no refutation. They were such as every man could see through; and in many of his remarks he doubted not he had been anticipated by that contempt with which the House would naturally regard the weak reasoning, but wicked policy, of these pretexts. He now came to his conclusion — We, said he, have, in every instance, observed the strictest neutrality with respect to the French: we have pushed, to its utmost extent, the system of temperance and moderation: we have held out the means of accommodation: we have waited till the last moment for satisfactory explanation. These means of accommodation have been slighted and abused, and all along there has appeared no disposition to give any satisfactory explanation. They have now, at last, come to an actual aggression, by seizing our vessels in our very ports, without any provocation given on our part; without any preparations having been adopted but those of necessary precaution, they have de-

clared, and are now waging war. Such is the conduct which they have pursued; such is the situation in which we stand. It now remains to be seen whether, under Providence, the efforts of a free, brave, loyal, and happy people, aided by their allies, will not be successful in checking the progress of a system, the principles of which, if not opposed, threaten the most fatal consequences to the tranquillity of this country, the security of its allies, the good order of every European Government, and the happiness of the whole of the human race! He then proceeded to move the following address in answer to His Majesty's message:

*That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, to return His Majesty the thanks of this House for his most gracious message, informing us, that the Assembly, now exercising the powers of Government in France, have, without previous notice, directed acts of hostility to be committed against the persons and property of His Majesty's subjects, in breach of the law of nations and of the most positive stipulations of treaty; and have since, on the most groundless pretences, actually declared war against His Majesty and the United Provinces: to assure His Majesty that, under the circumstances of this wanton and unprovoked aggression, we most gratefully acknowledge His Majesty's care and vigilance in taking the necessary steps for maintaining the honour of his Crown, and vindicating the rights of his People: that His Majesty may rely on the firm and effectual support of the Representatives of a brave and loyal People, in the prosecution of a just and necessary war, and in endeavouring, under the blessing of Providence, to oppose an effectual barrier to the farther progress of a system which strikes at the security and peace of all independent nations, and is pursued in open defiance of every principle of moderation, good faith, humanity, and justice.*

*That, in a cause of such general concern, it must afford us great satisfaction to learn that His Majesty has every reason to hope for the cordial co-operation of those powers who are united with His Majesty by the ties of alliance, or who feel an interest in preventing the extension of anarchy and confusion, and in contributing to the security and tranquillity of Europe.*

*That we are persuaded, that whatever His Majesty's faithful subjects must consider as most dear and sacred, the stability of our happy Constitution, the security and honour of His Majesty's*

*Crown, and the preservation of our laws, our liberty, and our religion, are all involved in the issue of the present contest; and that our zeal and exertions shall be proportioned to the importance of the conjuncture, and to the magnitude and value of the objects for which we have to contend.*

Mr. POWYS seconded the address. He thought it the duty of every man to stand forward, on the present occasion, in support of the Government and Constitution of the country. He promised to take upon himself the responsibility of laying burdens upon his constituents, where the cause was their protection and preservation by a just and necessary war. Had he been one of those men who saw no danger at home or abroad, he should certainly not have been so forward in granting his support to a Ministry he had been accustomed to view with jealousy and distrust; but at present he thought it incumbent on himself to lay those jealousies aside, and endeavour to awake the country to a sense of her wrongs and of her interests. He said that he did not profess any system of opposition; that the sole guide of his conduct was the love of his country and regard to its constitution. He thought that every thing dear to us in government and society was put in peril by the principles and power of France. The conduct of France had been so atrocious to us, and every other nation with whom she had any concern, that every principle of self defence justified the address in the utmost latitude of the words. He could call her, he said, nothing but a monster, whose hand was against every man, and therefore every man's hand should be against her. He considered the opinions of the French such as were incompatible with good order and civil society, and tending to spread a pestilence of the most contagious nature. He observed that gentlemen had held in that House that a war against opinions was unjust and useless. He contended that the decree of fraternity was an ample declaration of war, on the part of France, against all opinions of all mankind except their own; and he thought he should act the part of a Member of the National Convention, rather than that of a Representative of the British Nation, if he did not use every exertion in his power to oppose them. He lamented that there should be people so perverse and unprincipled as to approve of the proceedings in France, or at least of their principles, and to re-

commend their adoption in this country. Endeavours had been made to wean the people from that Constitution which had so long protected them, and under which they had so long flourished in peace and prosperity. Those efforts, however, the honest loyalty of Englishmen had made abortive. Every objection to the conduct of Ministry, on the subject of France, he had heard without receding from his opinion, that they had acted with a proper regard to the welfare of this country. What interest could they have, he asked, to plunge this nation into an unnecessary war? Their interest was surely on the side of peace. A work lately published, by a Member of the National Convention of France, pronounced, as an axiom in English politics, that the Minister who declares war never sees the end of it. He hoped and believed that this assertion, at least in the present instance, would be totally groundless; but it showed how opinion on this ground leaned. He rejoiced much at the good opinion the country at large entertained of the present Ministers, even though he should think that opinion over-rated their merits. It would produce confidence, and confidence would produce strength to repel and restrain the dangerous power by which we, in common with all Europe, were now assailed. He entertained no doubt whatever as to the sincerity of Ministry, and of their strenuous exertions for the security and honour of this country. It had been asserted, he observed, that the present war was a war of kings against men; that in this country, the constitution of which is a limited monarchy, he considered the King as the key-stone of the Constitution, and that to declare war against the King was to declare war against the People. He thought it very injudicious to draw any line of distinction between the poor and the rich, by awakening their discontents and inflaming their minds, by representing to them the burdens that would be imposed on them by the war: he said the rich joined in bearing the burdens as well as the poor, and he would always tell this latter description that they had a deep stake even in that property they did not immediately enjoy; and he should as readily declare, that those who had but little, had yet such a stake in the Constitution of this country, and the blessings it produced, that it would be better to part with some portion of that little, than, by retaining it, risk the many other advan-

tages they possess. He was convinced there was not in the kingdom scarce a man of property that would not sincerely contribute to prevent the dangerous innovations which threatened us. It had been asked, what can we get by going to war? We shall get just what we should lose by not going to war. The same question may be asked as to a highwayman: what do we get by defending ourselves against him? We prevent him from taking our purse.—Negociation had been talked of as expedient, but he, for one, could never consent to so humiliating a step, as negotiating with a gang of unprincipled desperadoes. He had not, he said, been noted for systematic support or opposition to Ministers, and he spoke the language of independence, in his present concurrence with them. So convinced was he of the necessity of giving Government at this crisis a real and effectual support, that he would not forbear repeating his willingness to incur any responsibility for that purpose. He observed, that many had been forward to assert, that the constitution of this country had not been in danger; but he declared, that he thought far otherwise; that it recently had been in danger, from the combinations of bad men at home; for he averred, he less feared the arrows that flew by day, than the pestilence that walks by night.

Mr. FOX said, that on an occasion so important, and not fearing the charge of pusillanimity from considering the present crisis as highly alarming, it would ill become the duty which he owed to his constituents and to the nation, to decline meeting the imputation of being the abettor of France, with which he was already menaced; or by the bold misconstructions of his sentiments and arguments to which he had been accustomed, to be deterred from examining and stating what was the true situation in which the country was involved in war. He had never accused the honourable gentleman who seconded the address of a systematic opposition to Ministers, nor of acting upon any system; but he called upon him to name those persons in the House, if any such there were, whom he meant to include under the description of supporters of the French system. The honourable gentleman knew that just so were those treated who opposed the folly and injustice of the American war. Yet, notwithstanding their being long and industriously misrepresented as the abettors of rebellion, a band of as patriotic and as ho-

nourable men as ever deserved public gratitude by public services, by some of whom he trusted he should be supported in opposing the address now moved, united their abilities to put an end to that war, and at length succeeded. The right honourable gentleman who moved the address stated the origin and necessity of the war, on grounds widely different from those assumed by the honourable gentleman who seconded it. The latter said, the power of France, under every change of men and circumstances, was a monster, whose hand was against all nations, and that the hand of every nation ought to be against France. The former had said, that the cause of the war was not our general bad opinion of France, but specific aggressions on the part of France. So far the difference was great with respect to our immediate situation of being actually at war; and it was still greater when we came to inquire into our prospect of peace. If we were at war because France was a monster whose hand was against all nations, it must be *bellum internecinum*—a war to extermination; for nothing but unconditional submission could be adequate to the end for which the war was undertaken, and to that alone must we look for a safe or honourable peace. If, on the contrary, we were at war on account of a specific aggression, for that aggression atonement might be made, and the object being obtained, peace might be concluded. He therefore hoped that the right honourable mover of the address was sincere in the statement he had given, although he had failed in making out the grounds on which he endeavoured to support it. Few of those, he trusted, who had been most zealous in recommending the expediency of this war, wished it to be a war of extermination—a war for extirpating French principles, not for circumscribing French power; yet all their arguments tended to alarm him. They never talked of the danger of French power, without introducing as a danger more imminent, the propagation of French principles. The honourable gentleman asked, if he could be expected to make terms with an highwayman, or to take the highwayman's purse as a satisfaction for his own? Certainly not. The honourable gentleman knew his duty to society better, than to let the highwayman escape, if he had the means of bringing him to punishment. But this allusion shewed, that the war with France was, in the opinion of the honourable gentleman,



a war of vindictive justice. We said, that our object in war was not to effect a change in the internal government of France, but to weaken her power, which, in its present state, was dangerous to us, our allies, and to Europe ; and that object obtained, we were willing to make peace. But would any man say, that when he had disarmed an highwayman, it was safe to leave him free to get other arms ? No man certainly ; and no more on this principle could we in any state of humiliation to which the power of France might be reduced, leave her at liberty to recruit that power, and to renew aggressions, to which we contended she must have the inclination, whenever she had the means. The honourable gentleman might support Ministers for any reasons that to him seemed good—either because he thought them wise or ignorant, honest or dishonest ; but he had no right to accuse those who thought differently from himself, of sowing disaffection among the people, because they wished to inform the people what were the true grounds of the war, which they were called upon to support with their property and their lives. The honourable gentleman rejoiced that the Public entertained a more favourable opinion of Ministers, in the present crisis, than Ministers deserved. Did he mean to argue, that when Ministers, by their misconduct, had brought the country into danger, and the people, ignorant of their true characters, were disposed to think well of them, the House of Commons, who knew better, should endeavour to continue, instead of removing their delusion ? His doctrine would then come to this—that implicit confidence in Ministers, so often and so justly reprobated, was the first duty of the House ; that they had nothing to watch, and ought never to inquire. Monarchy, it was truly said, was the corner-stone of our constitution, and of all the blessings we enjoyed under it ; but it was not the only corner-stone ; there was another fully as important—the constant jealousy and vigilance both of the people and their representatives, with respect to all the arts of the executive power.

He felt himself considerably disappointed by His Majesty's Ministers. He had flattered himself that when unanimity was so very desirable, they would have brought down a message from His Majesty, calculated to insure it ; that they would not have considered triumphing over the very small number to which

they boasted of having reduced their opponents, to be a matter of such consequence, as to call for an address to which they knew those few opponents could not agree, because to do so must preclude them from all subsequent inquiry. If they had moved an address, simply alledging the cordial co-operation of the House in prosecuting a just and necessary war, to a safe and honourable peace, to such an address, whatever might have been his opinion of the previous conduct of Ministers, whether he had thought it temperate and conciliatory, or arrogant and provoking, he should have agreed. But the House was now called upon to vote that Ministers had given no cause or provocation for the war ; to say that they would enter into no investigation of the origin of the war ; to give them indemnity for the past, and a promise of support for the future. This was the manifest tendency of the address ; and to prevent the want of unanimity, which such an address could not but occasion, he should move an amendment, in which even the warmest advocate of the war might concur, because it expressed no disapprobation of Ministers, as theirs ought to have expressed no approbation.

But first he must examine the alledged causes of the war.— He would not enter into any of the common-place arguments on the miseries and calamities inseparable from war. He did not mean to call them common places in the bad sense of the words, for they were truths so familiar to the minds of men, that they were never listened to without assent ; and, however unnecessary it might be to enforce them by eloquence, or amplify them by declamation, their being universally admitted was sufficient to prove, that war should never be undertaken when peace could be maintained without breach of public faith, injury to national honour, or hazards of future security. The causes of war with France were in no respect different now from what they were under the Government of Louis XIV. or Louis XVI. What then were these causes ; not an insult or aggression, but a refusal of satisfaction when specifically demanded ; what instance had Ministers produced of such demand and of such refusal ? He admitted that the decree of November 19th, entitled this country to require an explanation ; but even of this they could not shew that any clear and specific explanation had been demanded. Security that

they would not act upon that decree was indeed mentioned in one of Lord Grenville's letters, but what kind of security, was neither specified, nor even named. The same might be said with respect to the opening of the Scheldt, and their conquest of Brabant. We complained of an attack on the rights of our ally, we remonstrated against an accession of territory, alarming to Europe; but we proposed nothing that would be admitted as satisfaction for the injury; we pointed out nothing that would remove our alarm. Lord Grenville said something about withdrawing their troops from the Austrian Netherlands; but if by that was understood a requisition to withdraw their troops, while they were at war with the Emperor, without any condition that such evacuation of territory conquered from the enemy was to be the price of peace, it was such an insult as entitled them to demand satisfaction of us. The same argument applied to their conquest of Savoy from the King of Sardinia, with whom in his opinion they were at war as much as with the Emperor. Would it be said that it was our business only to complain, and theirs to propose satisfaction? Common sense must see that this was expecting too much from one independent power to another. By what clue could they discover what would satisfy those who did not choose to tell with what they would be satisfied? How could they judge of the too little or the too much? And was it not natural for them to suppose that complaints for which nothing was stated as adequate satisfaction, there was no disposition to withdraw? Yet on this the whole question of aggression hinged; for that the refusal of satisfaction, and not the insult, was the justifiable cause of war, was not merely his opinion, but the opinion of all the writers on the law of nations; and how could that be said to have been refused which was never asked? He lamented, that at a time when the dearest interests of the country were at stake, the House should have felt so little concern as to deprive him of the opportunity of making the motion of which he had given notice, for want of a sufficient attendance to ballot for an Election Committee. By that motion he meant to press for a distinct and specific declaration of the causes of the war, and had he succeeded it would have had this good effect, that both we and the enemy would have known the grounds of contest, been able to appreciate them,

and the war might have been but of short duration. There was much in the decree by which the French declared war, which could not fairly be alledged as just cause of war. But under the former good Government of France was it unusual to crowd into a manifesto setting forth the causes of war every complaint that could be imagined, good, bad and indifferent? It were indeed to be wished that nothing were introduced into such declarations but what was at once true and important; but such had not yet been the practice of statesmen, who seemed more attentive to the number than the validity of their complaints. In 1779, the Spanish declaration was swelled to 100 articles; and to examine every article of the present French declaration would only shew that those who now exercised the Executive Government were not wiser than their predecessors.

To have suffered Earl Gower to remain at Paris, after the 10th of August, would have implied no recognition of the Government that succeeded that to which he had his formal mission, any more than to have negociated with that Government in the most direct and safe way, in preference to the indirect and hazardous. But the right honourable gentleman, who could not get rid of the idea of recognition, exclaimed, "Would you recognize a Government which by its own confession is no Government; which declares itself only provisional till a Government can be framed?" This he would answer was the safest of all recognitions, if a recognition it must be, for the Government being only provisional, we could only be understood to recognize provisionally, and were at liberty to act as the case might require, with any other power that might arise in its stead. But did not history shew us, that to treat and to recognize were not considered as the same? Did not we treat with Philip of Spain, as King, at the very time that we were at war to dispute his succession; and was not the recognition of his title, far from being considered as admitted by us on that account, actually stipulated as an article of the peace? Did not France, when at war to dispute the accession of William III. to the throne of England, treat with him as King, and was not the recognition of his title also made one of the conditions of peace? Still, however, he would admit, that withdrawing our Minister, or

not sending another, was not a just cause of war on the part of France ; but could it be denied, that to treat one nation in a manner different from others was a symptom of hostility?—The recalling of Ministers was certainly once considered as an indication of war, for the commercial treaty provided for a case where no war was declared but by such recall. None of the alledged grounds in the French declaration could be more absurd, than that the circulation of their assignats were prohibited in this country, for that was purely a measure of internal regulation, as much as it would be to prohibit the circulation of paper issued among ourselves that perhaps stood on a much surer capital. But even here we were not quite impartial, for although that paper was called worth nothing which at present brought fourteen pence halfpenny for half a crown, the paper created by that gigantic act of swindling, the assignats issued by the leaders of the combined armies, were not certainly worth more, but we had not thought it necessary to forbid the circulation of them ; we had not prohibited the circulation of American paper even during the war, nor was it at all necessary, such paper wanted no prohibition. We had the right to prohibit it if we pleased, but he did not like assigning one reason for a thing when we evidently acted from another. Prohibiting the exportation of foreign corn to French ports, while it was free to other countries, it was said, arose from preceding circumstances. According to these circumstances it might be a justifiable or unjustifiable act of hostility, but it was an act of hostility so severe that the circumstances which justified it would have justified a war, and no such circumstances, as he had already proved, could be shewn. The Alien bill was not a just cause of war, but it was a violation of the commercial treaty, both in the letter and the spirit.—The right honourable gentleman said, the French had made regulations in their own country by which the treaty was before completely broken and at an end. Did he complain of those regulations, for it was expressly provided by the treaty itself, that no violation should put an end to it till complaint was made, and redress refused. But here lay the important difference. The French made no regulations that put aliens on a different footing from Frenchmen. They made general regulations of safety and police, as every nation had a right to

do. We made regulations affecting aliens only ; confessed to be more particularly intended to apply to Frenchmen. It was admitted that the French desired an explanation of these regulations, and that an explanation was refused them. By us, therefore, and not by the French, was the commercial treaty broken. Our sending a squadron to the Scheldt they complained of as an injury. And here the right honourable gentleman introduced the popular topic of their charming operations in Belgium ; the disturbance of which they thought themselves intitled to resent as an aggression. He was as little disposed to defend their operations in Belgium as the right honourable gentleman, although he saw not for what purpose they were here alluded to, unless to inflame the passions, and mislead the judgement ; but if by that squadron we had disturbed them in their operations of war against the Emperor, which he admitted we had not done, they would have had just cause to complain. Then, says the right honourable gentleman, they complain of our conduct on the afflicting news of the murder of their King ; what, shall we not grieve for the untimely fate of an innocent Monarch most cruelly put to death by his own subjects ? Shall we not be permitted to testify our sorrow and abhorrence on an event that outrages every principle of justice, and shocks every feeling of humanity ? Of that event he should never speak but with grief and detestation. But was the expression of our sorrow all ? Was not the atrocious event made the subject of a message from His Majesty to both Houses of Parliament ? And now he would ask the few more candid men who owned that they thought this event alone a sufficient cause of war, what end could be gained by farther negociation with Chauvelin, with Maret or Dumourier ? Did Ministers mean to barter the blood of this ill-fated Monarch for any of the points in dispute, to say the evacuation of Brabant shall atone for so much, the evacuation of Savoy for so much more ? Of this he would accuse no man ; but on their principle, when the crime was committed, negociation must cease. He agreed, however, with the right honourable gentleman, and he was glad to hear him say so, that this crime was no cause of war ; but if it were admitted, it was surely not decent that the subject of war should never be even mentioned without reverting to the death of the King.—

When he proposed sending an Ambassador to France, "What," said the right honourable gentleman, "send an Ambassador to men that are trying their King." If we had sent an Ambassador, even then; had our conduct towards the French been more candid and conciliating, the fatal issue of that trial might have been prevented. But, said the right honourable gentleman, we negotiated unofficially. The importance to any wise purpose of this distinction between official and unofficial negotiation, of this bartering instead of selling, he could never understand; but even to this mode of negotiating the dismissal of M. Chauvelin put an end. But M. Chauvelin went away the very day after he received the order, although he might have stayed eight days and negotiated all the while. Was it so extraordinary a thing that a man of honour, receiving such an order, should not choose to run the risk of insult, by staying the full time allowed him; or could he imagine that his ready compliance with such an order would be considered as an offence? When M. Chauvelin went away and M. Maret did not think himself authorised to negotiate, Ministers sent a message to Lord Auckland, to negotiate with General Dumourier, which reached him too late. Admitting this to be a proof of their wish to negotiate, while negotiation was practicable, what was their conduct from the opening of the session? If he or any of his friends proposed to negotiate—"Negociate," they exclaimed, "we are already at war." Now it appeared that they did negotiate with unaccredited agents, although the Secretary of State had said such a negotiation was not compatible with his belief; and last of all, strange conduct for lovers of peace! they ordered to quit the country the only person with whom they could negotiate in their unofficial way. He was happy to see the right honourable gentleman so much ashamed of this mutilated farce of negotiation, as to be glad to piece it out with Lord Auckland, and General Dumourier. Then was asked the miserable question, "What interest have Ministers in promoting a war? If, as it has been said, that the Ministers who begin war in this country are never allowed to conclude it?" Admitting this to be true, for which he saw no good reason, then surely they who endeavoured to avert a war, ought to be allowed some credit for the purity of their motives. But Ministers never

opened a fair communication on the points in dispute with France. They acted like men afraid of asking satisfaction, for fear that it should be granted—of stating the specific causes of war, lest they should lose the *prétext*. An opinion somewhere stated, had been adverted to, that the people might consider this as a war in which Kings were more interested than their subjects. He felt great respect for monarchy, and it was neither his practice nor his inclination to speak harshly of Kings. He had already said, that monarchy was the corner, or rather the key-stone of the British Constitution, that is limited, not unlimited monarchy. But with all due reverence for crowned heads, was it impossible to conceive that Kings may love, not limited, but unlimited monarchy; and that resistance to the limited monarchy attempted to be established in France, in the room of the unlimited monarchy, by which that country was formerly governed, might have been the true cause of the combination of some of the crowned heads of Europe. Our King had sat too long on the throne of a free kingdom, he had had too much experience that love of his people was a stronger defence than guards and armies, to forfeit that love, by transgressing the bounds which the Constitution prescribed to him, were even his virtues and his wisdom less than they were known to be. But had not Kings the frailties of other men? Were they not liable to be ill advised? What became of that freedom of speech which was the boast of Parliament, if he might not suppose, that by evil counsellors their ears might be poisoned, and their hearts deceived? He therefore feared, that this war would be supposed a war for restoring monarchy in France, and for supporting rather the cause of Kings, than the cause of the people. He would be the last to draw a distinction of interest between the rich and the poor; for whatever the superficial observer might think, nothing was clearer, when philosophically considered, than that a man, who was not immediately possessed of property, had as great an interest in the general protection and security of property, as he who was; and therefore he reprobated all those calls upon the particular exertions of men of property, as tending to excite the idea of an invidious distinction, which did not exist in fact. When the attack on France was called the cause of Kings, it was not a very witty, but a sufficient re-



ply, that opposing it might be called the cause of subjects.—He imputed bad motives to no man, but when actions could not be explained on one motive, he had a right to attempt to explain them on another. If there were at present such a spirit in this country, as in the beginning of the American war, what would be our conduct? To join the combined powers in their war on the internal Government of France. He was happy that the public abhorrence of a war on such a motive was so great that the right honourable gentleman felt himself called upon to disclaim it at great length. But how had Ministers acted? They had taken advantage of the folly of the French, they had negotiated without proposing specific terms, and then broke off the negotiation. At home they had alarmed the people that their own constitution was in danger, and they had made use of a melancholy event, which however it might affect us as men, did not concern us as a nation, to inflame our passions and impel us to war; and now that we were at war, they durst not avow the causes of it, nor tell us on what terms peace might have been preserved. He rejoiced to hear that we had no treaty with the Emperor. If our motives were now suspected, he hoped our future conduct would be such as to put away suspicion. If we joined the Emperor and the King of Prussia, we must make a common cause with them, or act always with the jealousy and suspicion of parties either of whom might secure their own views by a separate peace at the expence of the rest. When we found ourselves drawn into this common cause, we might say that we were forced to what we did not intend; but the fact would be, that we should be wasting the blood and treasure of the people of this country, for an object which the people of this country disclaim—to enable foreign armies to frame a Government for France. Such an instance would furnish more arguments against the mechanism of our Constitution, than all the writers who had scrutinized its defects. He hoped we neither had nor should have any treaty with the combined powers, unless our objects were specifically stated—but what might be the moment of discussing these objects? The moment of danger and alarm, with the powerful engine, fear, influencing their decision. He understood, by the promise in His Majesty's speech, of employing firm and temperate measures—he un-

derstood first, remonstrance on the causes of complaint, then a specific demand of satisfaction, and an armament to give efficacy to both. On his hope of the first two he had voted for the third. The right honourable gentleman said we had received insults that ought not to have been borne for twenty-four hours. These were magnifying words. In the affair of Nootka Sound the aggression by Spain was as direct and unqualified as any that could be stated, and yet we had borne it for twenty-four days. Why was not the same course pursued now as then? He was now called upon, as a Member of that House, to support His Majesty in the war, for the war was begun, and he would do it; but he was not pledged to any of those crooked reasonings on which some gentlemen grounded their support of Ministers, nor less bound to watch them, because, by their misconduct, we had been forced into a war, which both the dignity and the security of Great Britain would have been better consulted in avoiding. He was never sanguine on the success of war. It might be glorious to our army and our navy, and yet ruinous to the people. The event of the last campaign—*procul absit omen*—and the example of the American war, had taught him that we might be compelled to make peace on terms less advantageous than could have been obtained without unsheathing the sword; and if this might be the consequence to us, the consequences to our ally, the Dutch, must be such as he would not suffer himself to anticipate. The ordering M. Chauvelin to depart the kingdom, and the stopping the exportation of corn to France, when exportation was allowed to other countries, were acts of hostility and provocation on our part; which did not allow us to say, as the proposed address said; that the war was an unprovoked aggression on the part of France. Truth and justice were preferable to high-sounding words, and therefore he should move an amendment, containing nothing that was not strictly true, and in voting which the House might be unanimous.

He concluded with moving an amendment, to the following purport :

“ We learn, with the utmost concern, that the Assembly,  
 “ who now exercise the powers of Government in France,  
 “ have directed the commission of acts of hostility against the  
 “ persons and property of your Majesty’s subjects, and that

“ they have since actually declared war against your Majesty  
“ and the United Provinces, we humbly beg leave to assure  
“ your Majesty, that your Majesty’s faithful Commons will  
“ exert themselves with the utmost zeal in the maintenance of  
“ the honour of your Majesty’s crown, the vindication of the  
“ rights of your people, and nothing shall be wanting on our  
“ part that can contribute to that firm and effectual support  
“ which your Majesty has so much reason to expect from a  
“ brave and loyal people, in repelling every hostile attempt  
“ against this country, and in such other exertions as may be  
“ necessary to induce France to consent to such terms of paci-  
“ fication as may be consistent with the honour of your Ma-  
“ jesty’s crown, the security of your allies, and the interests of  
“ your people.”

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS said, that he was certainly desirous of unanimity, but he could by no means agree to purchase it at the price of adopting the amendment proposed by the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) which, under the appearance of affording support to the Executive Government, seemed totally to take away the idea of any real intentions to do so. For what, he asked, was the tendency of that amendment, and of the arguments of the right honourable gentleman? It was no other than this, that they must now fight, because war was declared by France, but that they were about to engage in a war unjust and unprovoked. Yet he seemed almost to admit, that the French had no justifiable cause for a declaration of war; for though he had made several observations on the recal of Lord Gower, the Alien bill, and one or two other topics, he did not seem to consider them to be just causes of war. The right honourable gentleman, indeed, dwelt rather longer on the subject of the ships sent to the Scheldt; but whatever on that head might have been alledged on the part of France, Ministers were entitled to credit, when they solemnly asserted that that was done solely with the view to support our ally, the Dutch, whom they were bound to defend, and with no view to disturb the French in Belgium. With respect to the murder of the King, it had never been mentioned as affording a ground for war with France, though it surely afforded an illustration of the danger of French principles, and to what length they would go, if not successfully opposed. The dismissal of M. Chauvelin had

been adverted to and blamed, as putting a stop to negociation ; but the fact was, that M. Chauvelin was not dismissed, till after he had demanded to be received and acknowledged by this Court, as accredited by the Republic ; and therefore it was clear, that that was not a measure whereby an end was put by us to conferences with unaccredited agents. As to the propriety or impropriety of refusing to acknowledge or receive an accredited Ambassador, he would not at present say any thing. Even after an embargo had been laid on our vessels by the French, His Majesty's Ministers had listened to the proposal of M. Dumourier, which had been mentioned by his right honourable friend, and had sent instructions to Lord Auckland to enter into a conference with him. The chain of reasoning made use of by the right honourable gentleman in the subsequent part of his speech, appeared to him most extraordinary ; for it seemed to be so managed, as to leave him an opportunity afterwards of attributing the cause of the war, to a wish to interfere in the polity of France.

The right honourable gentleman, at the same time that he supposed the Emperor of Germany, the King of Prussia, the Empress of Russia, and the King of Spain might wish to enjoy absolute power, paid many compliments to the King of Great Britain, and supposed it was impossible, that after the experience of so many years, his wisdom, justice, and virtue, which were prominent features in his character, could induce him to desire despotic power. At the same time he observed, that he was but a man ; that he might possibly become fond of greater power, because he might be so advised by his Ministers ; and it was pretty broadly hinted at the same time, that his Ministers had persuaded him to this war.

But could Ministers, he asked, have any influence in producing that conduct on the part of France which was the cause of the war ? By aggression, the right honourable gentleman had said, you provoke France to war, and in the progress of that war, you may contrive to ascribe it to a different cause from what is at present held forth. We complain of the decree of the 19th of November, and of the declaration respecting the Scheldt. The murder of the King of France is, no doubt, another ground of complaint, though we do not consider it as a cause of war. We complain also of the addresses from So-

cieties in this country being received in the manner they were by the Convention. These causes of complaint would not surely be attributed to Ministers, nor would any person suppose that Barlow and Frost were sent by them to Paris. It has been urged, in explanation of the decree of the 19th of November, that France only offered her assistance and fraternity, when the whole country had agreed, in which case any assistance from them would be unnecessary; but at any rate, they reserve to themselves the power of judging when they will join an insurrection in any foreign country, the dangerous consequences of which must be apparent. Their answer on the business of the Scheldt is, that at the end of the war, they would leave the Belgians and Dutch to settle the matter betwixt themselves. Was that a way of talking on a matter solemnly settled and guaranteed by various existing treaties? But when were they to leave the matter to be settled by the Belgians? They are to do so, they say, whenever the Belgians shall have consolidated their liberty; that is, when under the influence of the French arms, they shall have adopted a constitution on the principles of their supposed liberty; or, in other words, when they have in fact become subject to France. That explanation the French had given as their ultimatum. M. Chauvelin, prior to his dismissal, had demanded to be received as accredited from the Republic. He had formerly been received as the Ambassador of the murdered King; he had been treated with all proper respect. Whether, after the commission of that atrocious act, he could have been allowed to remain, and received as accredited from the Republic, he would leave to the feelings of gentlemen to determine. It had been said that this was a war without an object, and that it was unjust and unnecessary. In answer to this, he would beg leave to refer to a paper delivered by Lord Grenville to M. Chauvelin, in which, after stating certain matters which had given cause of offence to this country, a requisition is made, in the most distinct and precise terms, that France should renounce all views of aggrandizement; should confine herself within her own territories, and should desist from violating the rights of other nations. France has now made a declaration of war, and proceeded to hostilities against this country, without any offence on our part, and without previous notice. As to the supposed treaty with the Empe-

ror, which had been talked of, although he had formerly stated that there was no such treaty existing in January, he hoped he would not be so far misunderstood as to lead to a supposition that His Majesty's Ministers would not now endeavour to bring down every power on earth to assist them against France. Upon the subject of the proclamation, prohibiting the sending corn to France, he had been correct in his former statement, which was a necessary measure of precaution for the purpose of crippling the French.

The right honourable gentleman had observed, that his amendment to the address was very innocent, and that every gentleman in the House might safely vote it. The right honourable Secretary observed, it was so innocent, that it would be very pernicious, by withholding the approbation of the House, in the present crisis, to the measures of Government. They were going to war, because war had been declared by France, without any provocation on the part of Great Britain, in violation of the law of nations, and contrary to the most solemn engagements of treaties. They went to war to secure the best interests of this country, by effectually opposing a system of principles which, unless they were crushed, would necessarily end in the destruction of this and of every other country.

Mr. FOX explained.

The honourable P. C. WYNDHAM argued in support of the amendment. He thought there was something very mysterious in the present war, and that Administration were much to blame. They had made no allowance for the novelty of that situation in which France was placed. He declared that he should vote for the amendment, though in a minority of only five.

Mr. BURKE began with declaring, that, in his opinion, His Majesty's Ministers had clearly and explicitly justified their own conduct. The right honourable gentleman on the same bench with him, who moved the amendment to the address, in framing his motion, seemed to get into the situation which all those must do who wish apparently to reconcile what is essentially contradictory: it had indeed the appearance of a stratagem—he would vote an address, enabling the executive go-

vernment to carry on war, although he did not approve the conduct of Ministers.

The right honourable gentleman had, on a former occasion, lamented the smallness of his party, and it now seemed as if that party endeavoured to make amends for the smallness of their numbers by the discordance of their voices. He imagined some of them would find it difficult to account for their conduct in opposing the measures of Ministers on the present critical occasion. In their censures on France gentlemen had shewn a great deal of dexterity ; but it certainly had too much the appearance of stratagem. The right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) had complained of the misrepresentation of his expressions in that House—to him it appeared very extraordinary how a person of talents, so clear, so powerful, and so perspicuous, could possibly be misunderstood — how a person who took so much pains by repetition, and going over the same grounds again and again, to bring his superior powers to the low level of the vulgar eye, could possibly be subject to misrepresentation — how a gentleman, whose friends out of doors neglected no human art to display his talents to their utmost advantage, and to detail his speeches to the Public in such a manner, that he, though a close observer of the right honourable gentleman, had never been able to recollect a single idea of his that escaped the industrious attention of his friends to disclose to the Public, while those of a right honourable friend of his (Mr. Windham), whose abilities were equal to his virtues, were so mangled and so confused in the reports that were made of them, as to be utterly unintelligible to the Public. But that the right honourable gentleman should be misrepresented or misunderstood, under such favourable circumstances, was hard indeed. The right honourable gentleman had said that he hoped he was not reputed an advocate for France. To this he would say, that if the cause of France was an honest cause, it was justice to this country, and to mankind, to undertake her defence. The true skill of an advocate was, to put forward the strong part of his client's case, and gloss over or hide the weak ; to exhibit all its right in the brightest point of view, and palliate the wrong ; when he could no longer palliate, to contrive that the punishment should be as slight as possible, or to bring his writ of error, and by every quirk

evade it as well as he could ; and no man possessed that power in a greater degree than the right honourable gentleman. To his speeches he always attended with admiration and respect ; that which he had just heard on the present occasion he could not help estimating at a less account, as he had read every part of it in Monsr. Brissot's speeches in the National Convention, one part only excepted, and that part was, " that France had " used every means to conciliate the regards and good-will of " Great Britain." The right honourable gentleman had taken great pains to acquit himself, and apologise for his vehement endeavours to exculpate France from the charge of aggression : he professed that he was almost at a loss to see what it was that made him so prompt to exculpation. If France meant nothing but what was good, and England nothing but what was bad, he certainly owed no apology for the part he took in her cause. But to take the right honourable gentleman's speech in a serious view, it insinuated that the charge of the French was, that the King of Great Britain had brought on, or determined on war against the sense of his Ministers, against the sense of the Parliament, and against the sense of the People, in order to augment his own power. If this was the case, Ministers had betrayed their country by their acquiescence, and it was the duty of the House to address the King to remove them, and put into their place those whom they thought more fit for advice, more fit to do the duty of a Minister, and more likely to possess the confidence of the nation, if such there were. The right honourable gentleman had contended, that when Ministers brought the nation into war, they should declare how they intended to prosecute it, to what degree they intended to carry it, and what the object of it was. For his part, he had never heard or read of any such principle in theory, or of any such practice. The first question he conceived to be, whether there was just cause or foundation for the war ? The second, how it should be carried on to the greatest effect ? — He said, that in no instance whatever had any power, at the commencement of a war, declared what period was intended to end it, what means to carry it on, or what the object of it was. It was contrary to the policy of this and every other country ; it was never heard of. In this, and in every case of the kind, the common object of the alliance should be pursued to gain



the grand end. War had been declared by the French ; but they had not declared that they did not intend the ruin, the destruction, and total subversion of this country, and every establishment in it. Was it pretended that they had done, in declaring war, that which gentlemen had prescribed as the duty of this country ? No ; they declared war with the professed intention to bring it in the most formidable shape, attended with insurrection and anarchy, into the bowels of this country, to strike at the head of the Stadtholder, and to put no limits to their views in the war, while gentlemen would have Britain cramped and tied by a premature declaration of her object. As to the sentiments of the right honourable gentleman respecting the declaration of a specific object of the war, as well as the delicacy of interfering in the internal government of France, were they adopted by the House, this should be their language—" France ! you have endeavoured to destroy the repose of all the countries of Europe, and particularly of England : you have reduced your own country to anarchy and ruin, and murdered your King ; nevertheless, you may be assured, that, however horrible your crimes, though to the murder of your King you should add that of his infant son, his unfortunate Queen and sister, and the whole remains of his family, not one hair of your heads shall be hurt. You may war against us, threaten us with destruction, and bring ruin to our very doors, yet shall you not be injured."—Was ever, he exclaimed, such a declaration made in such circumstances ? Much pains had been taken by the right honourable gentleman to make light of the power of France, and to persuade the House that there was nothing to be feared from it. He would answer this by shewing what the right honourable gentleman had said on a former occasion. Here he began to read a part of a speech spoken by Mr. Fox on the commercial treaty, strongly demonstrative of the necessity of keeping down the overgrown power of France.

The SPEAKER called Mr. Burke to order ; it being disorderly to read any debate on a former occasion.

Mr. BURKE said he would beg leave to read from a pamphlet in his hand. [The House called Read ! Read !] Here he read from a speech of Mr. Fox's, that the effect of all our

wars had been carried on with a view to repress the power of France, and to support all the other powers of Europe against her; that France only changed her means, but that her ends were ever the same —

The SPEAKER again interrupted Mr. Burke, and requested that he would abstain from reading, as he knew it was against the orders of the House.

Mr. BURKE said he could not but lament that the rules of the House sometimes weakened the force of argument; but he considered order to be so far more necessary than argument, that he would willingly forego the latter to maintain the former. To return, therefore, to his argument, without the conclusive aid he should derive from the gentleman's own language, in the book in his hand, he contended that the whole body of policy of this country for ages was, that whatever country was the enemy of France, was naturally the ally of Great Britain. If that opinion was founded in true policy before the revolution, "let us try," said he, "what reason there is to alter that opinion since." If the new Republic have shewn no disposition to increase her dominions, if she has not annexed Savoy, Avignon, Liege, Nice, &c., to her territorial possessions, if she has not declared war against all subsisting Governments, and confiscated the properties of a corporation, if she had not held out the mask of confraternity as a signal and temptation to rebellion in all countries, but particularly in England, then statesmen have a right to change their opinions and systems of policy with respect to her.

Unlimited monarchy, the right honourable gentleman had said, was the object against which France directed the shafts of enmity. But he would be glad to know whether gentlemen would pretend to say that she was a friend to limited monarchy? No; she was an enemy to limited monarchy, as monarchy, and to the limitation, as limitation. The aristocracy of this country, all corporations, all bodies, whether civil or ecclesiastical, were the objects of her enmity. She shewed the most determinate malice, in the most express terms, against all parts of the British Government, equally to those that limit or support monarchy; not to this or to that, but to the whole. If conquered by Louis XVI., we might be sure of our established forms being unmolested; but if by her, of total ex-

sinction. Gentlemen had, with much pertinacity, asked, "Have you asked satisfaction for this?" This, he contended, was all an error, either of misconception or of will. The acts of France were acts of hostility to this country; her whole system, her speech, every decree, and every act, bespoke an intention preclusive of accommodation. No man, he would venture to say, had a more lively sense of the importance of the question before the House, or of the evils of war, than himself; a war with France, under such circumstances as now governed her conduct, must be terrible, but peace much more so. A nation that had abandoned all its valuable distinctions, arts, sciences, religion, law, order, every thing but the sword, was most formidable and dreadful to all nations composed of citizens who only used soldiers as a defence; as such, France should be resisted with spirit, vigour, and temper, without fear or scruple. In a case of such importance to this country, and to mankind, as the present, gentlemen should examine whether they had any sinister motive, as if in the Divine Presence, and act upon the pure result of that examination. He declared he had no hesitation to pronounce, as if before that Presence, that Ministers had not precipitated the nation into a war, but were brought to it by over-ruling necessity.

"I possess," said he, "as deep a sense of the severe afflictions of war as any man can possibly do."

"Trembling I touch it, but with honest heart."

I always held it as one of the last of evils, and wish only to adopt it now from the conviction that at no distant period we should be obliged to encounter it at much greater disadvantage. For four years past it has grieved me to the soul, it almost reduced me to death, when I observed how things were going on, and felt my utmost exertions unable to produce upon the Government of the country, or in the public mind, the danger that approached them. At length the infatuation was removed — Ministers awoke to the peril that menaced them ere it was too late; and our enemies, finding those arts fail in which they so much confided, are reduced to attack us in open war, and have declared against us. He should therefore give them his clear, steady, uniform, unequivocal support; not as

some gentlemen did, pretend support on one day, to lessen their authority, impair their power, and obstruct their plans on another, but in the fullest manner he could. If any charge was to be laid to the share of Ministers, it was that of too long delay ; but if from that delay any accident should arise from want of timely precaution, he would acquit them of it, knowing, as he did, that it was not possible for them, with prudence, to do otherwise, for had they done it at an earlier period they would not have been supported. In his opposition to the views and proceedings of France for two years, he was convinced he had not the feelings of the nation ; nor was it till full-blown mischief had alarmed the People, and roused the King, that the Government could have had a proper support. For his part, he thought himself bound in honour to support Ministers ; and, if bound to support them, certainly to oppose those who acted adversely to them. From such men, men who could neither vindicate the principles nor deny the power of France, yet impeded the measures taken to secure us against that power, he differed fundamentally and essentially in every principle of morals, in every principle of manners, in sentiment, in disposition, and in taste. France, he said, had for some time been in a continual series of hostile acts against this country, both external and internal ; first, it directed its pursuits to universal empire, under the name of fraternity, to overturn the fabric of our laws and government ; next, it invented a new law of nations, subsidiary to that intention ; then acted on that law. Next, it had directed the principal operations of that law to Great Britain ; and lastly, established a horrible tyranny within herself, chased every honest person out of it, held out temptations the most seductive to the unenlightened lower order of all countries, and furnished instruments for the overthrow of their government. The putting the King of France to death was done, not as an example to France, not to extinguish the race, not to put an end to monarchy, but as a terror to monarchs, and particularly to the Monarch of Great Britain. This new-created empire of theirs, Mr. Burke said, was only secondary to the accomplishment of their plans of shaking all governments. This had been professed out of the mouth of their Minister Cambon. He declared that the limits of their empire should be those that nature had set to them,

not those of justice and reason ; that is to say, the sea on one side, and the Alps and the Rhine on the other, together with a large cut of the Appenines, and all for the benefit of mankind, of liberty and equality. Should we be deterred by our wealth from resisting these outrages ? They directed their invectives and reproaches more at England than any other place. They executed their unhappy, innocent Monarch, whom they well knew to be no tyrant, principally, as they alledged, for a warning to all other tyrants, and an example to all other nations. Even a few hours after the execution of Louis XVI. their Minister of Justice, Garat, addressing the Convention, said, “ We have now thrown down the gauntlet to a tyrant, “ which gauntlet is the head of a tyrant.” He next read the declaration of the Members who voted for the death of the King, some saying, “ The tree of liberty could not flourish “ till sprinkled with the blood of tyrants ;” others declaring, “ That kings were no longer useful but in their deaths,” &c.

Gentlemen had said, that if Lord Gower had been left at Paris, or another Ambassador had been sent in his place, the unhappy fate of the King of France might have been prevented. This, he said, was answered by the fate of the King of Spain's Ambassador, who had made, at the desire of his Court, a requisition, but was refused. The murder of the King was intended only as a step to the murders of the other Kings of Europe, for they had declared that no monarchical country could have alliance with them : this, too, at the very moment that they were affecting to conciliate and explain away the decree of the 19th of November. War with the chateau, and peace with the cottage, was the plan of their new system : wherever their power extended, they put the poor to judge upon the life and property of the rich ; they formed a corps of desertion, a corps of assassination, and gave a pension to the wife and children of the assassin that was put to death for attempting to murder the King of Prussia. They declared all treaties with despots void ; they were outlaws of humanity, and uncommunicable people, who acknowledged no God but the sacred right of insurrection, nor any law but the sovereignty of the people, nor had any judges but *sans culottes*, whom they made arbiters of the lives and properties of all. As to the rights of the poor, he hoped he understood them as

well as the right honourable gentleman ; the riches of the rich were held in trust for the poor ; this the common people little understood, nor could they be made to understand it, if people held out false communications to corrupt them. Here he read a part of a letter from Dumourier, General of the bare-breeched corps, to Anacharsis Cloots, Orator of the naked posteriors. In this letter, after describing the blessings of Atheism, and that which he called liberty, he says, " these are the " sweets of philosophy ! What pity it is that bayonets and " cannon are the necessary means of propagating it." Atheism, he said, was the center from which ray out all their mischiefs and villanies, and they proceed to establish it with the sword.

He readily allowed that this was the most dangerous war we were ever engaged in ; that we were to contend with a set of men now inured to warfare, and led on by enthusiasm and the ardour of conquest to such a degree, that they bartered the arts, commerce, industry, manufactures, and civilization itself, for the sword. The alliances we may form, give, however, a good prospect of subduing them ; whereas, were they allowed to proceed, we may singly and in the end become their easy prey. Our riches would be no impediment to us ; provided we used them properly, they would more benefit than injure us in a war, provided that, in time of danger, we were more industrious to secure than to enjoy them. He then recited a variety of instances in which the French manifested the most envious and malignant disposition towards this country, and left no effort untried to do it every possible mischief. He read from the *Moniteur* of M. Condorcet an account of the meeting of the English Friends of the People in Paris ; their address to the National Convention ; with their fraternal reception, and their toasts after dinner. Of the latter, one was, the health of Citizens Fox, Mackintosh, Sheridan, Paine, Barlow, and the other friends of liberty who enlightened the People of England.

Should we be deterred by our wealth from resisting these outrages ? What ! exclaimed he, shall we live in a temporary, abject state of timid ease, to fatten ourselves like swine to be killed to-morrow, and to become the easier and better prey ? No ; God forbid ! If we have the spirit that has ever

distinguished Britons, that very wealth will be our strength, with which we shall be more than a match for their blind fury. With regard to the means the French have of carrying on the war, the plan of supply they had proposed was worthy of attention. Their Minister stated, that the country had been purged of 70,000 men of property, all of whose effects were to be confiscated, to the amount of 200 millions sterling. Thus, like a band of robbers in a cave, they were reckoning the strength of their plunderers. He said that they had two terms for raising supplies—Confiscation and Loan. The common people were relieved by confiscation of the property of the rich; and they reckoned on the confiscation of property in every country they entered, with the brotherly intent of fraternizing, as a sufficient supply for their exigencies in that country, and their resource for making war; thus they made war supply them with plunder, and plunder with the means of war. The right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox) had spoken with some asperity of an intention in Ministers to restore the ancient Government. He would not compare that Government with the Government of Great Britain; but certain it was, that it would be felicity and comfort, compared to the present state of tyranny exercised in France; for the very same papers out of which he had read the extracts before, contained the melancholy account that 30,000 manufacturers were perishing for want, in Lyons alone. Thus their enormities have produced misery; their misery will drive them to despair; and out of that despair they will look for a remedy in the destruction of all other countries, and particularly that of Great Britain.

Mr. SHERIDAN began with saying, that in one circumstance alone in the present debate, he felt himself actuated by feelings and motives similar to those professed by the honourable Member. The honourable gentleman had declared that he did not speak to support the Minister, for his case had been so perfectly made out by himself that it needed no support; but that he rose solely to repel the insinuations and charges of his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox), so he could sincerely declare that he had no thoughts of attempting to give additional weight to the arguments by which his right honourable friend had, in his judgement, refuted those of the Minister. He was provoked to rise solely by the insinuations and charges of the last

speaker against his right honourable friend. Never had he before indulged himself in such a latitude of ungoverned bitterness and spleen, towards the man he still occasionally professed so much to respect. His ridicule of the smallness of the number of friends, left to the object of his persecution, ill became him of all mankind; but he trusted, that however small that number was, there ever would be found among them, men not afraid upon such a subject to oppose truth and temper, to passion and declamation, however eloquently urged, or however clamorously applauded.

They were styled by the honourable gentleman a phalanx, and he styled the amendment of his right honourable friend a stratagem to keep this phalanx together, who had been otherwise, it seems, endeavouring to make up for the smallness of their numbers by the contrariety of their opinions; an odd description of a phalanx; no, he would never have given them that appellation, if he had not known the contrary of this to be the truth. He knew well their title to the character he had given them, and that a phalanx, whatever its extent, must consist of a united band, acting in a body, animated by one soul, and pursuing its object with identity of spirit, and unity of effort. His right honourable friend's purpose then, in this amendment, must have been, as he had stated it himself, to reconcile those differences of opinion in other quarters to which he had expressly alluded, and not those which existed no where but in the imagination of the man who he believed had at least exhausted all power of splitting or dividing farther. But what suggested to him it must be a stratagem of his right honourable friend's? Was he a man prone to stratagems? At any other time he would trust to his candour even for an answer—for if ever there was a man who disdained stratagems by nature, who knew how to distinguish between craft and wisdom, between crookedness and policy, who loved the straight path, and sometimes even without looking to the end, because it was straight, it was the very person whom he now arraigns for craft and trick.

The next object of his sarcasm was, his right honourable friend's complaining of being so often misrepresented—"Pity," says the honourable Member, "that a gentleman who expresses himself so clearly, and who repeats so much, should be so



“ liable to be misapprehended.” A pity, certainly, but not much to be wondered at, when misapprehension was wilful, and misrepresentation useful. The honourable Member had only mistaken his own facility in perverting, for his antagonist’s difficulty in explaining. But another grievance was, that, however misunderstood in that House, these same speeches were detailed with great distinctness and care in the public prints, while those of an honourable friend near him (Mr. Windham) were, as he declared, perfectly mangled and misrepresented. There was no stratagem to be sure in this insinuation, but was there much candour in it? Did any one living know better than he who made the insinuation, that nothing could exceed the carelessness of his honourable friend (Mr. Fox) to the representation of his speeches out of doors? he believed he had never seen, touched, revised, or printed, a single line he had spoken in Parliament in his life, or caused it to be done for him. If either friends or judicious editors were the more attentive to the task, he thought they did credit to themselves, and an important service to the Public at large: not less candid was it to insinuate a purposed misrepresentation of another Member’s (Mr. Windham) speeches. He claimed as long and as intimate a friendship with that gentleman as the right honourable Member who appeared so tremblingly alive for his fame; he thought equally highly of him in many respects: but he must in the frankness of friendship take the liberty of saying, that though no man had more information to ground argument upon, more wit to adorn that argument, or logic to support it; yet that the faculty, which had been rather sneered at in his right honourable friend, namely that of rendering himself perfectly perspicuous and intelligible to every capacity, was not the distinguishing characteristic of that gentleman’s eloquence. He was apt sometimes to spin a little too fine, and therefore it was possible, without any corrupt partiality on the part of the reporters of the debates, that his right honourable friend’s (Mr. Fox) speeches might be given with a superior degree of perspicuity.

He now proceeded to discuss Mr. Burke’s other attacks on Mr. Fox; he was charged with a dereliction of principle in having that day omitted to express his apprehension of the increase of French power, be the French Government what it

may; certainly Mr. Fox had not said one word upon that subject in his speech that day, but had he not in every one of his various previous speeches in this session distinctly and most forcibly avowed and urged his sentiments on that head? How pleasant to observe a gentleman, who begins his speech with taunting his right honourable friend for repeating things too often, reproach him in the next sentence for avoiding a repetition the most unnecessary he could have fallen into! But if the reproach was on that ground extraordinary, it was still more extraordinary that the general observation itself should come from the quarter from which it proceeded! A dread of France it seemed ought to be a fundamental principle in the mind of a British statesman; no alteration in her Government can change this principle, or ought to suspend this apprehension, and who was the gentleman so tenacious of this creed? The only man in all England who had held the directly contrary doctrine; had he or could we have forgot that in his very first contemptuous revilings at their revolution, only in the last session of Parliament, he had expressly scorned and insulted them as a nation extinguished for ever, and to be feared no more, and all in consequence of the change in their Government; that he described the country as a gap and chasm in Europe. Their principles had done more, said he, than a thousand fields like Blenheim or Ramillies could have effected against them; had they even got power by their crimes, like the usurpation of Cromwell, he could have respected or feared them at least, but they were blotted out of the European map of power for ever! And the historian had only to record "*Gallus olim bello floruisse*"—yet this very gentleman, said Mr. Sheridan, having last year expressed all this with as much heat as he had this year expressed the contrary sentiment, arraigns my right honourable friend for having omitted to re-echo for a single hour his unalterable apprehensions of the power of France, be the changes of its Government what they may.

It was still more curious to observe the manner of attempting to charge this circumstance on his right honourable friend. A book was produced, and he was proceeding to read a former speech of his (Mr. Fox's) as if he had ever once retracted his opinion on this subject. When the Speaker called him to order, the honourable gentleman did not seem to take the inter-

ruption kindly, though certainly he ought to have been grateful for it; for never, sure, was man, who had a greater interest in discouraging the practice of contrasting the past and present speeches, principles, and professions of any public man. Was the honourable gentleman ready to invite such a discussion respecting himself? If he were, and his consistency could be matter of regular question in that House, he did not scruple to assert that there was scarcely an *iota* of his new principles to which there was not a recorded contradiction in his former professions. Let a set of his works be produced, one Member might read, paragraph by paragraph, his present doctrines, and another should refute every syllable of them out of the preceding ones; it was a consolation to those who differed from his new principles to know were to resort for the best antidote to them.

His next accusation against the mover of the amendment was, that he should have put the question on so mean an issue, as whether the actual hostile overt-acts committed by France, had been sufficiently explained and disowned to this country. This it seemed was contemptible, it was a war against the principles of the French Government we were to engage in, and not on account of their petty aggressions against us; and therefore it followed, that it was to be a war to exterminate either them or their principles. The doctrine he thought both wild and detestable; but admitting that it was right, the honourable gentleman must yet extend his scorn and his rebuke to the Minister, as well as to Mr. Fox, for though they differed in their conclusion, they had discussed the grounds of the war precisely on the same principle and footing. The honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) differed equally from both, or more rather from the Minister, with respect to the professed motives and objects of the war, than from those who opposed the war. In this view he thought it most unmanly and unwarranted in the Minister to sit still and listen to these inflammatory rants, and even to cheer the war song of this honourable gentleman,

—quo non præstantior ullus,  
Ære ciere viros martemque accendere cantu.

VIRG.

when at the same moment he knew, and had even just declared, that the war was undertaken upon principles, and for purposes diametrically opposite to those upon which he suffered the House to be heated and misled by a spirit of vengeance and quixotism, which it was his duty to oppose and restrain.

With the same persevering purpose of inflaming and misleading, the honourable gentleman had read so much from the cruel and unjust proceedings against the late unfortunate Monarch, and from various other French publications. This habit of picking out all the hot, wrong-headed, and disgusting things, said or written by individuals in France, would never be so constantly resorted to for a fair purpose. The compilation on this principle, avowed by the Treasury, and so often quoted by the honourable Member, was an unworthy expedient, particularly as it had been done at a time when we still professed our hope and desire of peace. What, if a conduct like this had been pursued in France? If, when the Convention came to deliberate on war and peace, and to decide on the provocations alledged to have been given by our Government, pamphlets had been given to the Members at the door of the Convention, containing extracts from all the various speeches of that right honourable gentleman since the first revolution—containing, in appearance, every thing that the scorn of pride, the frenzy of passion, and the bitterness of malice could have urged against them, from the very outset; and assuming the applause of his hearers to be the will of the Government, and to speak the voice of the people? If to these had been added every furious and indecent paragraph that had appeared in our publications, and especially in prints connected with Administration, what would have been our opinion of such a proceeding at such a time? And what our indignation, if we learned that this had not been a work hatched in the dens and caverns of savage murderers and foes to peace, but that it had been produced under the direction of the Executive Council itself, and at the very moment that they were professing their desire of avoiding hostilities with us, and of promoting a good understanding? The honourable Member would have been among the first to have quoted such a conduct in them as a new proof of mean hypocrisy and determined malice.

The address and toasts of an idle dinner of English and others, at White's in Paris, was the next subject of the honourable Member's alarm and invective. And to aggravate the horror of this meeting, the House was assured, that at it were drank the healths of Mr. Fox and Mr. Sheridan. The insinuation was scarcely worth noticing, nor should he have adverted to it, but just to shew how well entitled the honourable gentleman was to the credit he claimed for the accuracy of his facts and information. This anecdote wanted only one little ingredient to produce possibly some effect, namely, fact. The truth was, that neither his nor Mr. Fox's health were drank at that meeting; and it was a little unlucky that the honourable gentleman, who ransacked every corner of every French paper for any thing that would make for his purpose, should have overlooked a formal contradiction of such toasts having been given, inserted by authority in the *Patrioté François*; and it was the more unlucky, as the purpose of bringing forward this important anecdote, was evidently to insinuate that they were in Paris at least considered as republicans; while the actual reason given for not drinking their healths was, that, though friends to the reform of abuses, they were considered as expressly against all idea of revolution in England, and known to be attached to the form of the existing constitution.

The next specimen of the honourable Member's extremity with respect to facts, was the manner in which he proved the enormous ambition of France, by the Convention's having adopted a proposition of the Minister of Justice, (Danton) that the future boundaries should be the Rhine, the Alps, the Pyrenees, and the Ocean; and great stress was laid upon this proposal having been made by a person of such rank in the State. Now for the fact.—Danton was not the Minister of Justice, and the proposition was not adopted by the Convention. The honourable gentleman might have recollected, that if Danton had been Minister of Justice, he could not have been a Member of the Convention; and he ought also to have known, that the proposition, so far from having been adopted, was scarcely attended to. But the ambition of France, and her aggressions against this country, were not, according to the honourable Member, the only causes of war. Religion demanded that we should avenge her cause. Atheism

was avowed and professed in France. As an argument to the feelings and passions of men, Mr. Sheridan said, that the honourable Member had great advantages in dwelling on this topic ; because it was a subject upon which those who disliked every thing that had the air of cant and profession on the one hand, or of indifference on the other, found it awkward to meddle with. Establishments, tests, and matters of that nature, were proper objects of political discussion in that House ; but not general charges of Deism or Atheism, as pressed to their consideration by the honourable gentleman ; thus far he would say, and it was an opinion he had never changed or concealed, that although no man can command his conviction, he had ever considered a deliberate disposition to make proselytes in infidelity as an unaccountable depravity of heart.—Whoever attempted to pluck the belief or the prejudice on this subject, style it which he would, from the bosom of one man, woman, or child, committed a brutal outrage, the motive for which he had never been able to trace or conceive. But on what ground was all this infidelity and atheism to be laid to the account of the revolution ? The philosophers had corrupted and perverted the minds of the people ; but when did the precepts or perversions of philosophy ever begin their effect on the root of the tree, and afterwards rise to the towering branches ? Were the common and ignorant people ever the first disciples of philosophy, and did they make proselytes of the higher and more enlightened orders ? He contended that the general atheism of France was, in the first place, no honour to the exertions of the higher orders of the clergy against the philosophers—and, in the next place, that it was notorious that all the men and women of rank and fashion in France, including possibly all the present emigrant nobility, whose piety the honourable gentleman seemed to contrast with republican infidelity, were the genuine and zealous followers of Voltaire and Rousseau ; and if the lower orders had been afterwards perverted, it was by their precept and example. The atheism, therefore, of the new system, as opposed to the piety of the old, was one of the weakest arguments he had yet heard in favour of this mad political and religious crusade.

Mr. Sheridan now adverted to Mr. Burke's regret that we had not already formed an alliance with the Emperor, and to

Mr. Dundas's declaration, that he hoped that we should ally with every power in Europe against the French ; this appeared to him to contradict Mr. Pitt's declaration, and it was the most unpleasant intelligence that he had heard that day. If we made such alliances, our principles and our purposes would soon become the same ; we took the field against the excesses and licentiousness of liberty, they against liberty itself. The effect of a real co-operation would be a more fatal revolution than even prejudice could paint that of France—a revolution in the political morals of England, and in consequence the downfall of that freedom which was the true foundation of the power, the prosperity, and the glory of the British nation. Sooner than entwine ourselves in such alliances, and pledge the treasure and blood of the country to such purposes, he had almost said he had rather see England fight France single-handed. He feared the enemy less than our allies. He disliked the cause of war, but abhorred the company we were to fight in still more. He had a claim to call on the right honourable gentleman to join him in these principles: who were these allies, and what had been their conduct? Had he (Mr. Burke) forgot his character of the Polish revolution? “ That glorious event had bettered “ the condition of every man there, from the Prince to the “ peasant, which had rescued millions, not from political slavery, but from actual chains and even personal bondage.”—Who had marred this lovely prospect, and massacred the fairest offspring of virtue, truth, and valour? Who had hypocritically first approved the revolution and its purposes, and had now marched troops to stifle the groans of those who dared even to murmur at its destruction? These allies, these chosen associates and bosom counsellors in the future efforts of this deluded nation. Could the right honourable gentleman palliate these things? No. But had he ever arraigned them? Why had he never come to brandish in that House a Russian dagger, red in the heart's blood of the free constitution of Poland? No, not a word, not a sigh, not an ejaculation for the destruction of all he had held up to the world as a model for reverence and imitation! In his heart is a record of brass for every error and excess of liberty, but on his tongue is a sponge to blot out the foulest crimes and blackest treacheries of despotism.

Mr. Sheridan next argued on an observation of an honourable Member's (Mr. Percy Windham,) who had said, that we refused to make any allowance for the novelty of the situation in which France stood after the destruction of its old arbitrary Government. This Mr. Sheridan pressed very forcibly; insisting that ~~it~~ was a mean and narrow way of viewing the subject to ascribe the various outrages in France to any other cause than this unalterable truth, that a despotic Government degrades and depraves human nature, and renders its subjects, on the first recovery of their rights, unfit for the exercise of them. But was the inference to be, that those who had been long slaves ought therefore to remain so for ever, because, in the first wildness and strangeness of liberty, they would probably dash their broken chains almost to the present injury of themselves, and of all those who were near them? No---the lesson ought to be a tenfold horror of the despotism, which had so profaned and changed the nature of social men; and a more jealous apprehension of withholding rights and liberty from our fellow creatures, because, in so doing, we risked and became responsible for the bitter consequences: for, after all, no precautions of fraud or of craft, can suppress or alter this eternal truth, that liberty is the birthright of man, and whatever oppose, his possession is a sacrilegious usurpation. Mr. Sheridan concluded with adverting to the evident intention of the Minister, to render unanimity impossible, but said he should never retract his former declaration; that the war once entered into, he should look to nothing but the defence of the country and its interests, and therefore give it a sincere and steady support.

Mr. DUDLEY RYDER begged to remind the House, that they were now actually at war; that it did not lie with them to argue about it, for they were forced into it. The question was simply, whether they should support His Majesty in his honourable intention of maintaining the dignity of his crown, and the interests of the Empire. The declared purpose of the amendment was to procure unanimity. Certainly unanimity was a desirable thing; but he did not covet much the sort of unanimity which the amendment was calculated to produce. He wanted only an unanimous expression of firmness in opposing the French, not a tame unanimity which promised no essential support. The nation was unanimous; more



perfect assent was never given to any war. The atrocious event in France had awakened the feelings and united the hearts of all the English people. That event, however it was to be deplored, might be said to have been so far beneficial as it had thus aroused the genuine feelings of Englishmen, and had opened their eyes to the true enormity of the French principles.

Mr. JAMES GRENVILLE said, he would not trouble the House at so late an hour (past one) did he not conceive it to be his indispensable duty. The address should not only promise His Majesty support, but reprobate the unprovoked aggression of France; for no reasonable man could read the papers before the House, and presume to tell the country that proper satisfaction had been given for that aggression. The decree of the 19th Nov. he observed, was justly called a decree of universal hostility; so far from explanation or satisfaction being given in it, there was a subsequent decree to execute it, with a disgusting, insulting menace, giving only fifteen days to adopt the plan laid out for them by the French, under penalty of being treated as enemies. As to the Scheldt, they had taken upon them to settle it upon the rights of nature, contrary to the rights of treaties, and insolently put off the question on it to the time of consolidation of French liberty in Belgia, a period entirely dependant on their own pleasure.

The amendment of Mr. Fox was then negatived, and the address, as moved by Mr. Pitt, carried without a division.

The House adjourned.

*Wednesday, 13th February.*

Sir ROBERT LAWLEY presented a petition on behalf of several of the inhabitants of the hundred of Hanlingford, stating, that actions at law had taken place, in which the sufferers from the late riots in Birmingham were plaintiffs, and the inhabitants of the hundred were the defendants. The plaintiffs recovered damages to the amount of near 30,000l.

The petition prayed, that leave be given to bring in a bill to empower the petitioners to raise that sum by way of loan, payable by instalments, with interest, and afterwards to charge it on the inhabitants of the hundred. On the question for bringing up the petition,

Mr. FOX observed, that he should not oppose the bringing up this petition ; but he thought it his duty to say, that he should oppose the whole principle of the bill which this petition prayed for, as being contrary to the meaning and spirit of the statute which governed the law upon this subject. That statute meant that the penalty should be imposed only on those who neglected to prevent a riot, or do all they could to prevent it ; these were the inhabitants of the hundred at the time the riot happened, and the present application went to the imposing a duty on the whole hundred at a future time. This was an endeavour to shift the burden from the shoulders of the guilty, and to lay it on the innocent. This was against the plainest principle of justice, and therefore he should always oppose it.

Mr. Chancellor PITT acknowledged the justice of the observations of the right honourable gentleman upon the meaning of the statute, as far as it applied to the present case, and entertained some doubt whether the hardships of the present case would not call for a particular and calm attention, independent of the positive clause of the statute.

A short conversation ensued, and the petition was brought up.

Lord COURTOUN appeared at the bar, and said, His Majesty had been waited on for the purpose of knowing when he would be pleased to receive the address of that House. His Majesty had appointed to-morrow, at three o'clock.

Mr. POWYS said, that there was a subject which made a considerable impression upon his mind, and which he wished to hint to the House as a kind of notice, that he would, on some future day, press the serious consideration of it. This was, the numerous canals that are now forming in every part of the kingdom. Canals he admitted to be of great public benefit ; but he conceived that even this useful projection might be carried to an extent that might prove prejudicial to the country. He meant to propose, on some future day, that a clause should be introduced in every canal bill, by which the proprietors of such canal should be obliged, after a reasonable limited number of years, to lay before both Houses of Parliament an account of their expences and disbursements, and that, after a reasonable profit being allowed, a proportion of the produce should go to the Public.

The honourable Captain BERKELEY said, that he was happy to hear some such plan was in agitation ; for, if the present rage for canals existed much longer, he was certain that the coasting trade would be totally ruined.

The House adjourned.

*Thursday, 14th February.*

This being the day appointed for the Members to go in procession to St. James's, with their humble address to His Majesty on his most gracious message, after some private business, the House adjourned for that purpose.

*Friday, 15th, and Saturday, 16th February.*

There not being, on either of those days, a sufficient number of Members to form a ballot, an adjournment took place.

*Monday, 18th February.*

The SPEAKER reported to the House, that the House attended His Majesty on Thursday last, with their address ; to which His Majesty was pleased to give this most gracious answer :

Gentlemen,

*I return you my warmest thanks for this affectionate and loyal address, and for the cordial assurances of your firm and effectual support in the measures which may be necessary for maintaining the honour of my Crown, and for prosecuting with vigour a just and necessary war, in defence of the dearest interests of my People.*

Mr. POWYS moved for leave to bring in a bill to regulate the duties to be chargeable on canals, by bills now or hereafter before the House, so as best to secure the interest of the subscribers and those of the public, and also the transfer of shares in canals ; and proposed that this motion should be referred to a Committee of the whole House to-morrow.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS gave notice that he should propose to refer the state of the finances of the East-India Company, at home and abroad, to a Committee of the whole House on Monday next. In that Committee he should move some propositions, which he should leave for the consideration of the House for a few days before calling for a decision upon them.

Mr. M. A. TAYLOR complained that this was interfering with the motion on the erection of barracks in the inland parts

of the country, of which he had given notice for Monday next.

Mr. Chancellor PITT thought it right to apprise the House, that the urgency of affairs rendering it desirable to have the state of the finances before them as soon as possible, he should, he thought, submit to them what was generally called the Budget, on this day three weeks.

Mr. MARTIN said, the motion of which he had given notice for the relief of the French emigrants in this country, he had been advised to decline. He hoped it would be taken up by those who were more likely to insure its success; he had only to observe, that many of them who had been supported by the subscriptions would soon be reduced to the utmost distress, unless something were done for them; and to express his wish that their wants might be relieved, without any reference to French politics.

Mr. WILBERFORCE gave notice of his motion on the slave trade for Tuesday se'nnight.

Mr. FOX hoped the circumstances of the business last session, would warn the honourable gentleman that no time was to be lost, and expressed some surprise at his naming so distant a day.

Sir WILLIAM YOUNG gave notice of his opposition to the motion, whenever brought forward.

Major MAITLAND apprised the House, that the report of the Committee appointed to inquire into some means of expediting the impeachment now depending, would be presented to-morrow; and if there was no material objection, he would then submit a motion to them on the subject.

Mr. Chancellor PITT suggested, that as the report was to be produced to-morrow, there might not be time to examine it on the same day, so as to enable the House to proceed to a discussion.

Major MAITLAND replied, that the mode proposed by the Committee was that which he had stated on a former day—To adopt the precedent before them in the case of Lord Strafford, and request a conference with the Lords, in order to induce them to hold their sittings more frequently, and for a longer term. He said, if there should be any opposition to his making his motion to-morrow, as the circumstances were such

as not to admit of delay, he would certainly avail himself of some near day for that purpose.

Mr. FOX said, he had delivered his sentiments so frequently on the several points included in his intended motion, that the House could not expect him to add much that was new. Having been accused in the last debate with repeating the same things over and over, he should now content himself with referring to the opinions he had formerly delivered; and hoped that he should not be again reproached, in the same breath that reminded him of repetition, with failing to repeat any one of those opinions to whatever part of the subject it might relate. The present crisis was awful. He had done every thing in his power to avert the calamity of war; and he did intend to have made one more attempt, if he had not been most unaccountably prevented by the failure of public business for a whole week. That opportunity was unfortunately lost. We were now actually engaged in war; and being so engaged, there could be no difference of opinion on the necessity of supporting it with vigour. No want of disposition to support it could be imputed to him; for in the debate on His Majesty's Message, announcing that we were at war, he had moved an amendment to the address, as much pledging the House to a vigorous support of it, as the address proposed by His Majesty's Ministers, and better calculated to ensure unanimity. But the more he felt himself bound to support the war, the more he felt himself bound to object to the measures which, as far as yet appeared, had unnecessarily led to it.

The necessity of the war might be defended on two principles: First, the *malus animus*, or general bad disposition of the French towards this country; the crimes they have committed among themselves; the systems they have endeavoured to establish, if systems they might be called; in short, the internal Government of their country. On this principle, there were few indeed that would venture to defend it: and this being disavowed as the cause of war by His Majesty's Ministers, it was unnecessary for him to dwell upon it. Secondly, that various things have been done by the French, manifestly extending beyond their own country, and affecting the interests of of us and our allies; for which, unless satisfaction was

given, we must enforce satisfaction by arms, This he considered as the only principle on which the necessity of the war could be truly defended, and in this he was sure the great majority of the House and of the country were of the same opinion. His object was to record this in an address; and whatever objection there might be as to time or circumstances, could he obtain the sense of the House purely upon the principle, he should be very sanguine in his hopes of success. Such a record would be a guide to their conduct in the war, and a landmark on which to fix their attention for the attainment of peace. In examining the alledged cases of provocation, he had maintained that they were all objects of negotiation, and such as till satisfaction was explicitly demanded and refused, did not justify resorting to the last extremity. He had perhaps also said, that Ministers did not appear to have pursued the course which was naturally to be expected from their professions. He did not mean to charge them with adopting one principle for debate and another for action; but he thought they had suffered themselves to be imposed upon, and misled by those who wished to go to war with France on account of her internal government, and therefore took all occasions of representing the French as utterly and irreconcilably hostile to this country. It was always fair to compare the conduct of men in any particular instance with their conduct on other occasions. If the rights of neutral nations were now loudly held forth; if the danger to be apprehended from the aggrandizement of any power was magnified as the just causes of the present war; and if, on looking to another quarter, we saw the rights of Poland, of a neutral and independent nation, openly trampled upon, its territory invaded, and all this for the manifest aggrandizement of other powers, and no war declared or menaced, not even a remonstrance interposed, for if any had been interposed, it was yet a secret—could we be blamed for suspecting that the pretended was not the real object of the present war—that what we were not told, was in fact the object, and what we were told, only the colour and pretext?

The war, however, be the real cause what it might, would be much less calamitous to this country, if, in the prosecution of it, we could do without allying ourselves with those who

had made war on France, for the avowed purpose of interfering in her internal government; if we could avoid entering into engagements that might fetter us in our negotiations for peace. Since negotiation must be the issue of every war that was not a war of absolute conquest, if we should shun the disgrace of becoming parties with those who in first attempting to invade France, and some of them in since invading Poland, had violated all the rights of nations, all the principles of justice and of honour.

On the first principles he had already stated, as one of two on which it might be attempted to justify the necessity of the present war, as it was most studiously disclaimed by Ministers, and all but a very few Members of that House, it was unnecessary for him to say any thing. On the second he had said, that the alledged causes of complaint were not causes of war previous to negotiation, and on this point his opinions were not new, as they had formerly been called, but such as he had always entertained, from the first moment of his forming opinions upon such subjects; neither were singular. He had since looked into the writers on the Laws of Nations, and by all the most approved, it was laid down as an axiom, that injuries, be they what they may, are not the just cause of war, till reparation and satisfaction have been fairly and openly demanded and evaded, or refused. Some of them even go so far as to say, that reparation and satisfaction ought to be demanded, both previous and subsequent to the declaration of war, in order to make that war just.

Our causes of complaint against France were, first, the attempt to open the navigation of the Scheldt; second, the decree of the 19th of November, supposed to be directed against the peace of other nations; third, their extension of their territory by conquest. The first of these was obviously and confessedly an object of negotiation. The second was also to be accommodated by negotiation; because an explanation that they did not mean what we understood by it, and a stipulation that it should not be acted upon in the sense in which we understood it, was all that could be obtained even by war. The third was somewhat more difficult, for it involved in it the evacuation of the countries conquered, and security that they should in no sense be annexed to France; and

no such security could perhaps at present be devised. But if we were aware of this, if we saw that during the war the French are engaged with other powers, they had no such security to offer ; if we knew that we were asking what could not be given, the whole of our pretended negotiation, such as it had been, was a farce and a delusion ; not an honest endeavour to preserve the blessings of peace, but a fraudulent expedient to throw dust in the eyes of the people of this country, in order that they might be hurried blindly into a war. The more he attended to the printed papers of correspondence, the oftener he read Lord Grenville's letter to M. Chauvelin, so often alluded to, the more convinced he was how extremely deficient we had been in communicating the terms on which we thought peace might be maintained. We told them they must keep within their own territory ; but how were they to do this when attacked by two armies, that retired out of their territory only to repair the losses of their first miscarriage, and prepare for a fresh irruption ? When to this studied concealment of terms were added the haughty language of all our communications, and the difficulties thrown in the way of all negotiation, we must surely admit, that it was not easy for the French to know with what we would be satisfied, nor to discover on what terms our amity (not our alliance, for that he had never suggested, though the imputation had been boldly made) could be conciliated. When to all these he added the language held in that House by Ministers, although he by no means admitted that speeches in that House were to be sifted for causes of war by foreign powers, any more than speeches in the French Convention by us ; and last of all, the paper transmitted by Lord Auckland\*, at the Hague, to the States General—a paper which, for the contempt and ridicule it expressed of the French, stood unparalleled in diplomatic history—a paper, in which the whole of them, without distinction, who had been in the exercise of power since the commencement of the Revolution, were styled “ a set of wretches investing themselves with the title of philosophers, and presuming in the dream of their vanity to think themselves capable of establishing a new order of society, &c. &c.”—

\* Vide the Memorial, page 240.



How could we hope the French, who were thus wantonly insulted, to expect that any thing would be considered as satisfactory, or any pledge a sufficient security? Compare Lord Auckland's language at the Hague with the pacific conduct of Ministers at home, as represented by themselves. While they were trying every means to conciliate, while with moderation to an excess, which they could not help thinking culpable, they were publicly ordering M. Chauvelin to quit the kingdom within eight days, but privately telling him, that he might stay and negotiate, while they were waiting for propositions from M. Maret, which M. Maret did not make. While they were sending instructions to Lord Auckland to negotiate with General Dumourier, Lord Auckland was writing that silly and insulting paper by their instructions; for if he had written such a paper without instructions, he was very unfit for his situation, and must have been instantly recalled. Thus, while, as they pretended, they were courting peace, they were using every manœuvre to provoke war.

For these reasons, he should move, that Ministers had not employed proper means for preserving peace, without sacrificing the honour or the safety of this country.

He came next to consider this conduct with respect to Poland. He had formerly said that he wished not to speak harshly of foreign Princes in that House, although the period was not long since passed, when it was thought perfectly allowable to talk of the Empress of Russia as a Princess of insatiable ambition, and of the late Emperor, as a Prince too faithless to be relied upon. But when he spoke of the King of Prussia, he desired to be understood as speaking of the cabinet of the Court of Berlin, whose conduct he was as free to criticise, as other gentlemen the conduct of the Executive Council of France. In May 1791, a revolution took place in Poland, on the suggestion, certainly with the concurrence, of the King of Prussia; and, as was pretty generally imagined, although not authentically known, with the Court of London. By a dispatch to his Minister at Warsaw, the King of Prussia expressed the lively interest which he had always taken in the happiness of Poland, and the confirmation of her new constitution, and his approbation of the choice of the Elector of Saxony, and his descendants, to fill the throne of Poland, made hereditary by

the new order of things, after the death of the reigning King. In 1792, the Empress of Russia, without the least plausible pretext, but this change in the internal government of the country, invaded Poland. Poland called upon the King of Prussia, with whose express approbation this change had been effected, for the stipulated succours of an existing treaty of alliance. He replied, that the state of things being entirely changed since that alliance, and the present conjuncture brought on by the revolution of May 1791, posterior to his treaty, it did not become him to give Poland any assistance, unless, indeed, she chose to retrace all the steps of that revolution, and then he would interpose his good offices both with Russia and the Emperor to reconcile the different interests. The different interests of foreign powers in the internal government of a free and independent nation ! It was singular that Ministers should be so keen to mark and stigmatise all the inconsistencies of the French with their former declarations, which had been too great and too many, and yet could see without emotion such inconsistency, not to say perfidy, as this conduct exhibited. He was not the defender of the gross departures which had been made by the French from their own principles ; but if we thought it unsafe to treat with them, because of their perfidy, we had little inducement to unite with the King of Prussia, who had violated not only principles, but an express treaty, in a more particular and pointed manner, than they had yet had an opportunity of doing. Among the powers at war, or likely to be at war with France, there was no great option of good faith. But the French, it was said, violated their principles, for the sake of robbery and rapine, to seize on territory, and plunder property. Let us look again for a moment to the King of Prussia.

In 1792 he limited the cause of war against Poland by Russia to the new Constitution, which he himself had approved, and promised to defend. But if once this obnoxious Constitution was completely subverted, and that excellent old Republic (for these crowned heads were great Republicans when it suited their convenience, which had for ages constituted the happiness of Poland) re-established on its ancient basis, he would interpose his good offices to conciliate the different interests and restore peace. What then prevented him from inter-

posing his good offices? Was not the new constitution completely subverted? Did not the Russian troops succeed in overrunning Poland? Were they not in possession of the whole country? And had not the Empress of Russia been able to restore the excellent old Republic? But if she was satisfied with her success in this respect, not so with the King of Prussia. He was a critic in principles. When he approved of their revolution, the principles of the Poles were unexceptionable; when they were attempting a brave but unsuccessful resistance to a more powerful adversary, their principles were not dangerous; but when they were overpowered by superior force, when they had laid down their arms, and submitted to their conqueror, when their whole country was possessed by a foreign army; then he discovered that they had got French principles among them, subversive of all Government, and destructive of all society. And how did he cure them of these abominable principles? Oh! by an admirable remedy! invading their country, and taking possession of their towns. Are they taunted with Jacobinism? Hew down the gates of Thorn, and march in the Prussian troops. Do they deny that they entertain such principles? Seize upon Dantzick and annex it to the dominions of Prussia. Now did not this seizure and spoil of Poland tend to the aggrandizement of the powers by whom it was perpetrated? Was it not a greater and more contemptuous violation of the law of nations than the French had yet been guilty of? Most undoubtedly it was. Had we opposed it? Had we remonstrated against it? If Ministers had any such remonstrances to shew, they would produce them in due time, and the House would judge of them; but while none were produced, or even mentioned, he must presume that none had been made. The invasion of Poland had this material aggravation, that the powers who invaded were not themselves attacked at the time. They had not the excuse of the French to plead, that they did it in a paroxysm of fear and danger, circumstances that prompt nations, as well as individuals, to many acts of impolicy and injustice. The King of Prussia first connives at, or consents to the invasion of Poland, which he was bound by treaty to defend. Next he attempts an unprovoked invasion of France, and is foiled; how does he revenge the disgrace of his repulse? By increasing his army

on the Rhine, by concentrating his forces for a fresh attack? No---he more gallantly turns round on defenceless Poland, and indemnifies his losses by seizing on towns where he can meet with no resistance. It was not, therefore, on any general system of attention to the balance of Europe that Ministers were acting, since, while they pretended to consider it as of the utmost importance in one case, they had suffered it to be most flagrantly infringed upon in another.

He concluded with moving the following resolutions—

“ That it is not for the honour or interest of Great Britain  
“ to make war upon France on account of the internal circum-  
“ stances of that country, for the purpose either of suppressing  
“ or punishing any opinions and principles, however pernicious  
“ in their tendency, which may prevail there, or of  
“ establishing among the French people any particular form of  
“ Government;”

“ That the particular complaints which have been stated  
“ against the conduct of the French Government are not of a  
“ nature to justify war in the first instance, without having at-  
“ tempted to obtain redress by negotiation;”

“ That it appears to this House, that in the late negotiation  
“ between His Majesty’s Ministers and the agents of the French  
“ Government, the said Ministers did not take such measures  
“ as were likely to procure redress, without a rupture, for  
“ the grievances of which they complained; and particularly  
“ that they never stated distinctly to the French Government,  
“ any terms and conditions, the accession to which, on the  
“ part of France, would induce His Majesty to persevere in a  
“ system of neutrality;”

“ That it does not appear that the security of Europe, and  
“ the rights of independent nations, which have been stated as  
“ grounds of war against France, have been attended to by  
“ His Majesty’s Ministers in the case of Poland, in the inva-  
“ sion of which unhappy country, both in the last year, and  
“ more recently, the most open contempt of the law of na-  
“ tions, and the most unjustifiable spirit of aggrandizement  
“ has been manifested, without having produced, as far as  
“ appears to this House, any remonstrance from His Majes-  
“ ty’s Ministers;”

“ That it is the duty of His Majesty's Ministers, in the present crisis, to advise His Majesty against entering into engagements which may prevent Great Britain from making a separate peace, whenever the interests of His Majesty and his people may render such a measure advisable, or which may countenance an opinion in Europe, that His Majesty is acting in concert with other powers for the unjustifiable purpose of compelling the people of France to submit to a form of Government not approved by that nation.”

Mr. BURKE said, that he thought no apology was due by the right honourable gentleman who preceded him, either to the House or to him, for fatiguing them. For himself, he never was one of those who felt pain in hearing the right honourable gentleman upon any subject but one—and that was, the business now before the House; that of French politics and French principles. Upon any other topic, however disposed the gentleman might be to repeat what he had said before, being a repetition of such excellent matter as always fell from the right honourable gentleman, he should be delighted to hear it. *Decies repetita placebit.* The copy of such an excellent original, though copied an hundred times, must be received with pleasure—But when the right honourable gentleman stooped to imitate wretched French daubers, he could not receive such imitations, he confessed, with satisfaction. He would rather see the copy of the right honourable gentleman himself, though a thousand times repeated, than a copy of such an original as Brissot; and he would aver, that there was not an argument used, or a proposition that had this night been made to the House, that he had not seen in French papers declared to be such arguments and such propositions as would be offered to that House. Whether this strange coincidence arose from accident, or whether the opinions he alluded to were taken by Brissot and the right honourable gentleman, one from the other, or grew out of one common stock, he could not pronounce—the House must judge of that.

The House, he said, had been this night treated by the right honourable gentleman with much new matter. It was the first time he had ever heard of any gentleman's having, while he endeavoured to procure an address to His Majesty, deprecating one war as an arduous one, laid grounds before the House

to induce them to enter upon another war, about a place in another and a remote part of the world. For his part, he never thought Poland, nor did he conceive that she was ever before considered, of such consequence, or so intimately connected with the interest of Great Britain, as to undertake a war on her account. People, he insisted, in all situations, but particularly nations, must, and ever would, have a predilection for their own safety. What though the King of Prussia took Thorn and Dantzick? (a circumstance that he by no means approved of); and what though the Empress of Russia overturned the Government of Poland? (which he declared he as little approved of); yet those were not so near nor such pressing concerns as that of France getting possession of the countries she had done, and daily augmenting her power. Nations, he said, were not to sit like Judges, to act with perfect impartiality, in exclusion of all ideas of self: Their first duty was to take care of themselves; and that of England particularly, was to have a watchful and jealous care of the aggrandizement and encroaching movements of France. France was near; Prussia and Poland were distant; and unless there were apprehensions of the injury to Poland ultimately reaching England, there was nothing that rendered it expedient for her to interfere. England saw Sweden overturn the Constitution of Poland; she afterwards saw the Czar depose Stanislaus, and put Augustus on the Throne of that kingdom. In short, she saw various revolutions in Poland, and ultimately a partition of it, and never stirred a hand: nor did the right honourable gentleman himself ever propose any interference, till the moment that the hostile and dangerous proceedings in France called for the whole force and energy of the country to be directed against her. This mode of acting, he said, was new and unprecedented. When war was declared by France, and every multiplied offence offered against Great Britain, when every principle she adopted, and every act she did, should be condemned and resisted; to censure that resistance, to turn the attention of the House to a remote part of the world, and neglect the balance of power at and near home, was to him inexplicable conduct.

The right honourable gentleman, he observed, had of late the extraordinary disposition to find France always just.

Though, by taking possession of Geneva and Basle, she had destroyed the independence of Switzerland; though, by taking Mentz, she had secured to herself the navigation of the Rhine; though, by entering, and, under the mask of friendship, taking possession of the Low Countries, she had aggrandized her power beyond all safe bounds; and though she had, under the same mask, entered Savoy, annexed it to her dominions, and planted the sterile tree of liberty in that sterile soil; and though she had ultimately declared war against Great Britain, France was still most just, and Great Britain was always wrong. In short, in conformity to the right honourable gentleman's doctrines, France should be nominated France the just.

When gentlemen attempted to impress on the House an idea, that England should not interfere with the internal Government of France, it would naturally occur, he said, that reciprocity should be looked for: that is to say, that France should not interfere in the internal Government of England. Was this the case? No. Could any one read the proceedings of the French Convention, without seeing that they granted indemnities for murder, lest the punishment for murder and assassinations there, should discourage a spirit of revolt in this country? Did this, he asked, look like intermeddling with the internal Government of England or not? But the other day, said he, Danton declared in the Convention, that they had thrown down a King's head as a gauntlet to the Kings of Europe; and that the scaffolds erected in Westminster Hall for the eternal trial of Mr. Hastings, would serve for the Ministers, and even (he felt, he said, an almost insuperable objection to express it) even for George himself! If the punishment of Ministry be necessary, France should leave it to ourselves to determine it; and, by not presuming to interfere with us, teach us not to interfere with her. When they passed the sentence for the sacrilegious murder of the best King that ever governed that country, some few objected to the policy of the murder, and gave as their reason, that possibly it might put their friends in England and Ireland out of humour with them, and prevent their views on this country. Did this look like an intention of interference with the internal policy of this country or not? Did this deserve the encomium lavished upon

them by the right honourable gentleman? If he did not know the purity of the right honourable gentleman's intentions, he should consider what he had said to be an encouragement to France to proceed in her designs to promote insurrection and anarchy in this country.

The right honourable gentleman had remarked, that in supporting the Ministers in this war, there were two parties, each having a separate ground of reasoning; one, the *malus animus* of France; and the general internal disorder in that country; and the second, the actual aggressions without reference to the other. He declared, that whatever opinion he broached, or whatever he said or did, committed no one but himself; he spoke only his own sentiments, he took from no one but himself, and he acted on his own single opinion. If he had stated the internal policy of France as a ground for war, it did not preclude him from the right of taking the aggression as a ground also.

The House might at one time reject that which necessity might afterwards oblige it to adopt; and it might yet be found expedient to interfere in the internal Government of France, by way of retaliation. For his part, he considered them to be robbers, and that they ought to be treated as such. Gentlemen might cavil at the word; but he still would repeat it, as the pirate told Alexander, that it was only because he had a greater army that he was not called a pirate too. So they, he said, were robbers, but, under cover of their forces, lost their true distinguishing appellation.

His reasons he had given on many occasions, and he would now give them again. His principal objection to France was her internal situation, and her disposition to pull down and destroy all states about her. So far from settling a Constitution, they had put all locality of Constitution out of the question; and, instead of confining their views to settle that of their own country, were for giving a Constitution of fraternity to all the world.

The right honourable gentleman had said, that the French might perhaps be got by negociation to repeal the decree of the 19th of November: but would the right honourable gentleman presume to say, or could the House expect, that they would repeal all the decrees and acts they had passed since that



time, every one of them confirming and following up, in express terms, the spirit of that decree? If they did, they must abrogate all their proceedings. The right honourable gentleman, he said, took no notice of the decree of 15th December; not a word of that. He, for his part, conceived it to be a thousand times worse than that of November; for it went to subvert the whole state of Mankind. For this they had not even offered any satisfaction; and though they have declared war, and pretended to assign reasons for it, they have not declared any end they have in view. For England, therefore, to declare her's, would be to fight upon unequal terms—as if a man should fight with single rapier, or rather with shield alone, against sword and shield. This doctrine, he insisted, though repeated an hundred times, was still new, unprecedented, and irrational.

The right honourable gentleman calling the King of Prussia a swindler, he thought to be highly improper and disrespectful, as he was an ally of Great Britain. France was in a different predicament, and, exclusive of her enormities, was an enemy: besides, she had vilified the King and Constitution of England, and was therefore a fit object for opprobrium. But to abuse the King of Prussia was neither politic nor decorous. Indeed the *sans culottes* language seemed now to have become the *bon ton*. The word despot was a new epithet in diplomatic language. He reminded gentlemen, however, that this country had made alliances with some of the greatest despots on the earth: in treating, they never inquired what the characters of the Princes with whom they treated were: the only question they considered was, whether that Prince could be useful in a confederacy against France? And this was a policy to keep down the aspiring ambition of that country.—The Grand Alliance was formed to interfere with the internal Government of France, and to force Louis XIV. to call the States General. In short, he said, the arguments used by the right honourable gentleman were such as, had they come from any other person, he would not have troubled himself, or taken up the time of the House, with answering. The whole of them with which the House had been surfeited, were hatched up in a variety of ways, in every form that the right honourable Cook could think of, and crammed down their throats. For his

part, however skilfully they were dressed, he wished rather to resort to plain British food, and to go back to the Grand Alliance.

He confessed, that his taste was either too coarse or too refined for the medley dished up of such diversified materials. He would prefer infinitely a solid English dish; a slice of good roast beef to a spoonful of *soup maigre*. Ministers, he wished it to be considered, were not bound by what he said, he having no connection with them. However he hoped that he could not be justly accused of rashness in any thing he had offered. Of all men, an old man who had seen the vicissitudes of life should be most cautious of giving rash counsel. It could not well be thought that a man so very old as he was, could have any personal gratification or interest in plunging his country into a war, merely to oppose

“ That Mountain Nymph, sweet Liberty.”

[This he quoted in allusion to the galleries of the National Convention, generally called the Mountain.]

This House, he said, had already, by a solemn vote, given its fiat to the war; and now the right honourable gentleman called upon it to disavow the principles upon which it had grounded that vote. For his part, he still voted for war, and was insuperably averse to treating; and he would give his reasons for it. In doing so he trusted that the House would give him credit for the proofs which he could, and would, if called upon, bring in establishment of what he should advance.

And, first, he contended for it, that France was not at present in a communicable or negociable situation. She was in a state of anarchy; for he held it to be the very essence of anarchy, that no man could answer for another, nor no race of men bind their successors. Who then could we negotiate with? Not with the provisionary Executive Council of France: their very title shewed that they had not power to treat: they had no power, either by delegation or usage. Like the Decemvirs of Rome, they were delegated to form a Constitution, and refer the result of their proceedings to the forty-eight thousand Republics of France. He strongly contended that there was no power constituted in France that could treat, for they declared themselves to be unalienable with other

States. In every country in the world there was some one man or body of men that were known to have powers to treat—in France there was none.

Roland he had once before described as a factious traitor, who had deceived the confidence of his King, and led him on to ruin. Le Brun rose to the rank of a Minister of State from being an obscure scribe in Liege; afterwards a journalist; from which station he was promoted to a higher department in a newspaper. From Liege he was driven, with disgrace, to grace the Senate and Executive Administration of the French Government.

Roland was surely not of consequence enough to take the whole Government of France on himself. Le Brun was the son of a Swiss porter, and, he should conceive, not of that imposing dignity to supply the place of all Government. Condorcet, though the most humane of all murderers, and Brissot, the most virtuous of all pickpockets, were not of weight enough, he thought, to assume the power. “It therefore,” said he, “comes to Monsr. Egalité, alias d’Orleans, and if you “treat with him, with all my heart.” As to Dumourier, he could not answer for the obedience of his army, relaxed and weakened as all government was; therefore he was out of the question.

As to Chauvelin, his being received here was the greatest instance of compassion to the unfortunate King of France. The black ingratitude that marked the character of that man must gain him the abhorrence of every honest person living. His father was a servant of the King’s, and died one day suddenly in attendance: the King took him, then only five years old, under his protection, put him in his father’s place, and reared him up; and the return he made him was to join the band of wretches that afterwards murdered him. In short, upon a minute examination of the conduct of the whole National Convention, he could not see one that was not stained by the most infamous crimes. In the whole groupe, taking Robespierre, Santerre, and all, the only man of any degree of honour among them was the hangman. This poor fellow had some degree of feeling, from which his colleagues were exempt: he had the spirit to refuse executing the King himself, though he was at no loss for deputies.

He then described the marked indignity offered to the King of Naples in sending a common grenadier to command an interview with him in his own palace, and the cavalier manner in which the low republican domineered over him. This proceeding he represented as a marked insult upon all the Kings in Europe.

While gentlemen talked of negociation, he should be glad to know what gentleman in England would go to France as Ambassador ; he knew of none : he was sure the right honourable gentleman would not ; he had too great a concern for his personal feeling : but statesmen were often willing to send others on a forlorn hope, on which they would not go themselves.

The right honourable gentleman had, with much flippancy, talked of the law of nations : he wished to know on what law the French could be expected to treat ; they had made a new law of nations of their own, and declared all treaties between Kings (or, as they call them, despots) void.

He declared he was at a loss to think, and it was very odd, that gentlemen should consider his opinions on French affairs hostile to them. He was attached to the old system — “ To it,” said he, “ I owe every thing I possess : under it, and the sanction of piety, I have received my education ; it is natural to me, therefore, to have such opinions.”

Gentlemen, he said, who were so charmed with the lights of this new philosophy, might say that age had rendered his eyes too dim to perceive the glorious blaze. But old though he was, he saw well enough to distinguish that it was not the light of heaven, but the light of rotten wood and stinking fish — the gloomy sparkling of collected filth, corruption, and putrefaction.

So have I seen, in larder dark,  
Of veal a sparkling loin,  
Replete with many a brilliant spark,  
As sage philosophers remark,  
At once both stink and shine.

He concluded by declaring his fixed opinion, that if we continued at peace with France, there would not be ten years existence of stability in the Government of this country.

Mr. GREY said, he would leave a great part of what had fallen from the right honourable gentleman who had just sat down to be answered by his new allies, with whom he seemed, in many points, to be at equal variance as with him and his friends; but he could not sit still and think he had discharged his duty, without answering some of the right honourable gentleman's arguments and allegations, though in doing this he was sensible that, on a subject already so often and so fully discussed, it was impossible to avoid much repetition. Mr. Grey adverted to what Mr. Burke had dwelt on a good deal, that the arguments and propositions of himself and his friends had appeared in foreign papers; this surely neither could nor ought to have any effect in preventing them from bringing forward their sentiments on an occasion so momentous to this country. There was a time when the right honourable gentleman himself was of the same opinion, during the discussions in that House with respect to the American war. That his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox), whose reasoning was always so clear and copious, should be so frequently misunderstood, was, no doubt, wonderfully surprising. Never was he so much surprised as to find his right honourable friend so much misunderstood and misrepresented in what he had said to-night, as to suppose that he was seeking for another object of war: his argument, indeed, had been so extremely clear and perspicuous, that it could hardly be otherwise than wilfully misunderstood. It was precisely this—that as Ministers seem now so solicitous to preserve the equal balance of Europe, it would have become them to have been no less so formerly, when the general system was equally attacked. The argument of danger, from the aggrandisement of France, could not operate, for she had then shewn no views of aggrandisement, and was besides threatened by a most formidable and infamous combination, and these combined powers allowed the Empress of Russia to possess herself of Poland, which we saw with indifference. When his right honourable friend was urging this argument with such irresistible force, how could it be said that he was seeking for a new war? But the right honourable gentleman would not admit that the aggrandisement of Russia, by the acquisition of Poland, was of equal importance to this country with the aggrandisement of France. On this point

it was surely singular that the total destruction of the balance of Europe should have been endangered by Russia's possession of Oczakow, while her acquisition of Poland seemed to excite no emotion whatever. For his part, he charged Ministers with the neglect which had brought on the country this calamitous crisis. As to the King of Prussia's invasion of Poland, history afforded no instance of a more unprincipled, a more perfidious act. In proof of this, Mr. Grey read the declaration of the King of Prussia in May, 1791, upon occasion of the acceptance of the new constitution of Poland, in which he highly applauded that constitution, and contrasted it with what he says now, upon entering Poland with an army, when he approves the conduct of Russia in overturning it. We had heard much of the faith of treaties on the business of the Scheldt, and this carried so far, as if we were bound to act as principals, even though not called upon as federates. But, on the same principle of the faith of treaties, is Prussia bound to guarantee the city of Dantzick? It is said to be a new thing that those who support a war should condemn it: has the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) never done so? Did he not do so in the case of the American war? I know too well the die is now cast, and that (in his own phrase) we have passed the Rubicon. Now that the country is actually engaged in war, they must give their support in carrying it on; but are they therefore to desist from watching narrowly the conduct of Ministers? They are accused of holding and supporting French opinions, and gentlemen may say what they please, rather than sacrifice principle and the true interest of their country, he would, with his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox), submit to incur a temporary odium: they were bound to inquire whether the war be justifiable, even if they should be alledged to join what had been said in France. Mr. Burke, from his principles and doctrines, may agree with Ministers; but can Ministers agree with him? This is a war of extermination. If, says he, we treat with France, we must seal the death warrant of the King, and the destruction of the British Constitution. Did Ministers, while carrying on their late negotiations, suppose they would have done so, had they treated? No; Mr. Burke complains that we abuse foreign powers, and talk disrespectfully of despots. For his part,

with respect to that infamous combination of despots, he most sincerely joined his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox) in praying to assuage their malice, and confound all their devices. The opprobrious terms of reproach made use of by Mr. Burke, without proof of any kind, might be equally well repeated by a parrot: it could pronounce the word "Monsters;" it could also say, "Brissot, the most virtuous of pickpockets." He would now shortly go over the conduct of Ministers in the negotiation which has now ended in involving this country in a ruinous war. The right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) has vindicated himself by alledging that, to the last moment, he shewed a disposition to an amicable negotiation, while the French indicated no serious intention of the kind. But let us put ourselves in the situation of the French: they had offered explanations, and agreed they should be offered in an inofficial way; had we been as serious as they, we should surely have stated precisely with what we would have been satisfied. What should we have thought, had we been treated in the same manner that France has been? Are the French less lively in feeling because they have changed their Government? For his part, he had always thought that we had never made a sufficient allowance for their new and peculiar situation. He agreed entirely with his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox), that before the entering upon war can be considered in any way just, something must be demanded on the one side, and refused on the other, except only in the case of an actual attack. Was the negotiation betwixt this country and France in such a state as to be justifiably broke up? This is an important question. It is said that the last paper delivered was in the shape of an ultimatum; but we have been in the use of seeing many repeated ultimatums, and if the French did not shew a determined resolution not to accede to any conciliatory terms, we could not be justified in breaking up the negotiation. As to what had been so much talked of respecting the conduct of France in declaring war at the very same time that M. Dumourier was applying for a conference with Lord Auckland, it was surely necessary, in this matter, that all the circumstances should be taken together. On the 17th of December, by the Minister's own account, they treated France as an enemy; an act of aggression then took place, in direct breach

of the commercial treaty, and yet we complain that France is the aggressor. It is said that she has no Government with which we can treat; but surely Mr. Burke did not always think it improper to treat with a provisional Government. During the American war, it had been asked if we could treat with a vagrant Congress? He said, that as the most likely mode of bringing about pacific measures, he had wished an Ambassador to be sent to France, and he stated several other grounds which induced him to impute to Ministers the rupture with France. He approved of the motion of his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox), because it expressed disapprobation of measures which he highly disapproved of; and he concluded with giving notice, that to-morrow he would bring before the House some more detailed motion on the subject, not with the view of introducing any fresh debate, but in order that his sentiments might appear fully and distinctly on the journals of the House, and to serve as a sort of protest on his part against measures, which appeared to him to be fraught with consequences so ruinous and calamitous to this country.

Mr. JENKINSON was of opinion, that the negotiations demonstrated that no honourable means of procuring peace had been neglected: he thought that the same principles which dictated the armament must have dictated war on our part, even if we had not been attacked: he agreed with gentlemen on the other side, that the cause of war should always be distinct, in order to know when to look for peace. Here there were three separate and distinct causes of war, the decree of the 19th of November, the business of the Scheldt, and the aggrandizement of France: and Ministers had done right in stating precisely the causes; but he could not see the propriety of stating the specific reparation required, because that might be extremely inconvenient, and perhaps impracticable. He next proceeded to consider these causes of war, and the answer which had been given by France with respect to them, which he considered as totally unsatisfactory; their explanations are repetitions, and they are given as ultimatums. He insisted that the recall of Earl Gower, with all the circumstances attending it, manifested no hostile disposition on the part of this country; and it was clear, from the answer of M. Le Brun, that France was herself of that opinion; between the recall of Earl Gower and



all their recent acts of aggrandizement and of hostility, there was no hostile act on our part, subsequent to these acts; he indeed admitted the stopping of the corn ships, and the dismissal of M. Chauvelin, both of which he vindicated as necessary: Ministers, he said, had been blamed for not preventing the armies of Austria and Prussia from entering France. This he considered in three points of view: 1st, Could we have done so? 2d, Would it have been just? 3d, Would it have been politic? And on all these separate grounds he vindicated the conduct of Ministers. As to the policy of recalling Earl Gower, he stated several arguments, from the danger of offending even France herself, if the Duke of Brunswick had been successful; and from the danger of offending our allies, the Courts of Vienna and Prussia, had we sent his Lordship back to Paris after the failure of that expedition, as well as from other considerations of policy. He next adverted to the idea that had been thrown out, of sending an Ambassador, with his pockets full of money, to bribe the Convention. But in any event, said he, to whom must we have accredited our Ministers? To a set of murderers, and, in diplomatic language, to cultivate with them a good understanding. With respect to the French sending an Ambassador to Cromwell, he asked, whether we would consider the conduct of Cardinal Mazarin as worthy to be held up as an example to us? With respect to Poland, what could we do but remonstrate? Perhaps Ministers may have done so; but this they could best tell themselves. We could do nothing at all events but send a fleet to the Baltic, and the doing so could answer no purpose without the co-operation of a military force. Poland, with respect to us, was a distant object; and the prudence of our acting in any shape behoved to be determined by the probability of success. There was a moment for us to have humbled Russia, and by whom was the favourable opportunity prevented from being laid hold of? Besides, we were now to interfere with respect to Poland, which is at least comparatively a small evil; we must necessarily divide and weaken our efforts, in repelling a great and momentous evil. If we do not now vigorously oppose France, and she should continue successful, we must inevitably be at war in a twelvemonth hence with very great disadvantages;

Austria and Prussia crippled, and the maritime power of France, as well as her revenue, much increased.

But now war is actually declared; we have addressed His Majesty with the strongest assurances of support in carrying on a war which we have stated to be groundless and unprovoked. He neither knew nor had heard of any new facts or circumstances that have since then occurred, and he therefore thought that it would be highly dishonourable and improper in that House to give the lie to the address which they had so recently sent up to the Throne. He concluded with moving the previous question.

Mr. ADAM said, that the question was very plain, and the motion appeared to him to be in every respect such as the House ought to adopt as a first and proper criterion by which the public should judge of the present war and of the consequences that were likely to follow. He wished to draw the attention of the House very shortly to the state of the subject, but before he did so, it was impossible for him not to take notice of the speech of the honourable gentleman who spoke in the course of the debate, in which he stated the condition in which we should be involved if we had sent a Minister to France at the time when his right honourable friend advised it. The Chancellor of the Exchequer had said on a former occasion, that directions were given to Lord Auckland on the part of this country, to treat with General Dumourier, at the very time when it was stated that it was improper to send a Minister to France; was this, he would ask, for the purpose of imposing upon the people of this country, that the Minister should pretend to say, that the negotiation should be had at the time that he gave these directions? The consequence would have been, that an authorized Ambassador would have come from that country. The question now was, whether the House ought or ought not to come to a resolution, that this country ought not to interfere with the internal Government of France. He observed, that in the course of arguing the subject, gentlemen on the other side gave the point up, and chiefly relied on the three grounds insisted upon on a former debate, as reasons for the present war; the decree of the 19th of November; the plan of France for its aggrandizement, and their attack on our allies; these were the Minister's avowed reasons for the war, but

they were at variance with their own declarations, for they said one thing, and they meant another, upon this subject, and their views were to draw us into a war, the event of which it was impossible for any man to see. Mr. Adam here alluded to the conduct of Ministers towards M. Chauvelin, and made several observations on it, as also on the manner of their giving instructions to Lord Auckland to treat with General Dumourier at the time they affected to say they would not treat with any agent of the French Republic. What were the public to infer from this? Why certainly that there was no sincerity in the professions of His Majesty's Ministers, that they said one thing and meant another. He maintained also that the conduct of Ministers from the beginning to the end discovered a temper and disposition to be at enmity with France; indeed they had almost avowed as much. He wished the House to reflect on the last declaration of Lord Auckland, in which the character of the French was insulted: they were stated to be now, and for the last four years to have been, a set of wretches calling themselves philosophers, &c., and yet with the agent of these very wretches our Ministers gave Lord Auckland leave to treat. This led to the conclusion, that our Ministers avowed opinions in that House, and that such opinions they did not act upon; and for their conduct they assigned reasons with which the people of this country ought not to be satisfied, at a time when they were to be engaged in a war.—Mr. Adam called upon the House to compare the present with all former wars; it was probable that the steps already taken, on the part of the Government of this country, would not be followed up with a declaration of war; a ceremony observed in all others, except, for obvious reasons, in the last. It was proper that when a country like this went to war, that war should be declared; it was a regular constitutional mode, and ought to be observed; because when a declaration of war took place, there was always something like a reason assigned for going into it. Now he wished that to be the case here; as the people of this country would know at least the avowed object of the war, and Ministers would be then in some degree tied down to some point. This he observed ought to be the case, even where we had no doubt but that the war would be successful; as success was likely to render us arrogant, and from

that point we should become indiscreet, and might eventually lead ourselves to great difficulty and danger; from enthusiasm we might perhaps go on, and insist on forming a new Government for France; afterwards we might proceed to the extirpation of their principles, and follow the folly of others.— Here he gave an historical sketch of the progress of ambition, arising from success on the onset of war, which proved injurious in the conclusion; but if this was likely to be the case, if the war which we were now engaged in was to be successful upon the avowed principles for its necessity, what was to be the effect of it if it should be unsuccessful? He observed that he supported the resolution now before the House, because it went to the point of defraying the object of the war: and he was sure if it was not defined, the people, not knowing the object of it, would be very adverse to the burden of fresh taxes, and that discontents would soon arise; and he was sure, that if Ministers intended to proceed upon this war with vigour, they should do every thing in their power to prevail upon the people of this country to join it heart and hand, as on the loss of that spirit, a war would soon be ruinous to us. Mr. Adam then entered into observations upon the balance of power in Europe, and took notice of the manner in which the Minister was sometime since going to equip a fleet for the Baltic against the Empress of Russia, for the fortress of Oczakow, and of his afterwards suffering Poland to be parceled out by that very power: he added several other reasons for assenting to the motion.

Mr. JEKYLL said, that he rose to thank the right honourable gentleman for the motion which he had brought forward, with respect to a war which he considered as unjust and calamitous. He could not content himself with giving a silent vote on this occasion, when he considered it as the duty of every Member to come forward, and boldly to avow his sentiments. He understood that the sense of the House was, this night, to be taken; and he was happy that he should be one in a minority, however small, to whom the nation would look with a retrospect as the saviours of their country. Of all minorities, at the commencement of a war, this was the most considerable. He adverted to what had been the case at the commencement of the unhappy American war. He begged to set right an ho-

honourable gentleman, with respect to what had passed in another house, when corruption had been represented as a successful mode of treating with the Convention. This had been stated in consequence of the Convention being described as a corrupt body. If they were not to be corrupted, the argument took a different turn. The House certainly were obliged to an honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke), that he had not loaded all the seven hundred and forty-five Members of the Convention, individually, with the most severe invective. A great number of them had been the objects of his most violent censure. He had represented them as knaves and pickpockets; and had, at last, descended to Billingsgate in comparing them to stinking fish. Ministers he certainly regarded as the aggressors in the present war. Let us put the French in the same situation with ourselves? Might they not say that we had treated their Ambassador, during his residence in this country, with contempt; that we had dismissed him with scorn and indignation; that we had clearly discovered hostile views by stopping their supplies of corn; and by the regulations of the Alien bill with respect to natives of that country? Were none of these to be considered as aggressions on the part of Ministers? Indeed, by the conduct of Ministry, the French had been put into a situation in which they could not act otherwise than they had done in declaring war; and this war was brought about during a period of the prosperity of this country, during the system of œconomy which had been so frequently held out by administration. By this war, that prosperity was put to hazard; and all the advantages of that œconomy thrown away. He should beg to call the attention of gentlemen to the insular policy of this country, which rendered it not necessary for us to embroil ourselves in the disputes of the continent, at the expense of our own interest, but allowed us to stand by and act the part of fair traders, and avail ourselves of all the advantages which resulted from our peculiar situation. Notwithstanding he considered Ministers as the authors of the present aggression, he still made a solemn appeal to them if there was any possibility of bringing about a peace, to employ all the means for this object; and, should they succeed, he should willingly forgive what he considered as blameable in their conduct, and grant them an amnesty for all that was past. France, it had been

said, was not in a negociable state. It would have been desirable that the effect of a conference between Lord Auckland and General Dumourier should have been tried; since, had the latter not been addicted to political tergiversation, he might probably have received it from the former in the way of inoculation. It was curious to observe how the Public had been cajoled on this occasion. The Parliament had been summoned in an abrupt, not to say an unconstitutional manner: alarms, reports of sedition, had been industriously circulated. The Attorney General had informed the House that he had no less than two hundred informations on his table; when, lo!—there had only yet appeared, in the result, the conviction of a solitary bill-sticker! Societies had been formed to constitute a mock-public; and gave to the war the colour of a false popularity. But was the war really popular? Ask the merchant, ask the manufacturer, ask the labourer? They would all say that it was a most dreadful war; that it was a war in which we had every thing to lose, and nothing to gain. Such was the voice of the real public, in opposition to that mock, fictitious public, composed of associations, whose declarations were attempted to be imposed as the expression of the sentiments of the nation at large. Nay, to such a length had the system of mean artifice been carried, that pamphlets, professedly issuing from the Treasury, had been published and circulated at the bar of that House, containing all the stuff and nonsense which had occurred in the French Convention, with a view to influence the prejudices and passions of Members, at a moment when they were called upon for the most calm and deliberate reflection. Had such an artifice been employed in any common trial, the bill would have been thrown out by the jury. On these accounts, he was happy in the opportunity which was now offered him of entering his solemn protest against a war, which he considered as no less unjust in its origin, than calamitous in its consequences.

Mr. DENT said a few words in support of the war, extolled the conduct of Ministers in their exertions to render it successful and glorious, and concluded with dissenting *in toto* from the proposed motion.

Mr. VAUGHAN said, that it was not sufficient to say we are now engaged in the war, and therefore that we must sup-

port it; as the same argument might be alledged by the French.

Mr. POWYS remarked, that he rejoiced, that on this day the sense of the House was decidedly to be taken, that they might now no longer be in the dark, who were on one side and who were on the other. We were now at war with France: She has declared war against us. What, in this crisis, was the duty of every good citizen? To support the measures of Administration, in order to enable them to carry on a war with proper vigour, and bring about a desirable peace. Would the present motion have either of these effects? On a former occasion, he had stiled certain gentlemen Advocates of France. From what had occurred in this night's debate, the House might judge whether they were or not. The present motion he considered as one of the most insidious that had ever been made, not certainly in intention, but in effect. It partly assumes, what that House had not admitted, and partly mis-states what they had. It had been mentioned as one ground of war—the internal Government of France. This was the internal Government, not as affecting the French themselves, but as affecting other powers and ourselves. He represented the motion as in this respect going contrary to the last address to His Majesty. The blame which it contained was all retrospective, and he left to the House to determine whether it could be attended with any good effect in the present situation of affairs to adopt such a motion.

Major MAITLAND said, that it was not his intention to enter at large into the present question. Every objection had been so completely answered, and every argument of his right honourable friend so fully established, as to render any thing which he could say unnecessary. He rejoiced that, on the present occasion, he should be one in a minority, which, however small in number, was not to be considered as less respectable, as acting from a sense of their duty and a regard to the interest of their country. There was one thing to which he had now reason to advert—the practice of calling him and those who were of the same opinion, advocates for France. He was no advocate for France, neither was he an advocate for German despots. He equally reprobated the crimes of anarchy and despotism; and if the honourable gentleman who

had spoken last, had called him an advocate for French anarchy, he would think himself entitled to call him an advocate for the bloody combination of despots against the liberties of France and of Europe. It was of no consequence to him, whether human misery arose from a Jacobin Society of Republicans at Paris, or from a Jacobin confederation of Princes at Pilnitz. If, on the one hand were seen the evil consequences of anarchy, on the other were no less forcibly displayed those of despotism. Here was the difference: in the one instance, that of anarchy, those cruelties which had been perpetrated, originated from popular fear and fury worked up to their highest pitch: on the other we beheld despotism sitting down in the moment of cool deliberation to meditate a system of the most sanguinary proscription. What was the lesson which we were thence to derive? It was a lesson of the necessity of that caution with which this country ought to take part in a war on either side, in which it could not engage without assisting either the views of anarchy or despotism.—The popularity of the war had been much talked of by Ministers, whose wish and interest it was that it should be popular: But was this war popular with the manufacturer, on account of which the most valuable part of our manufactures had declined considerably in value? Could this war, which had so greatly contributed to the fall of the stocks, be popular with the monied men? Or was this war popular with the labourers, the expence of which was to be defrayed from the sweat of their brows? Or, what was the true criterion of the popularity of a war, had thousands of volunteers been found coming into our army and navy? The reverse of the fact, he believed, was the case. Where was the armament for the purpose of a war? When Ministers wanted an armament for the sake of first bullying and then conceding, they had dragged the peaceable citizen from his home and family. They had robbed the merchant ships of their sailors, and used every exertion for equipping an expeditious and formidable armament. Here, where they were really bent upon war, they had been no less remiss than formerly they had been vigorous in their preparations, and it would be found that, at present, there was no armament, either by sea or land, adequate to the ob-



ject proposed, or fit for carrying into execution measures of hostility.

Mr. LAMBTON said, that he rejoiced that the sense of the House was to be taken, and that his name should go down to the country in that minority who approved of the motion of his right honourable friend. His right honourable friend had been called an advocate for France: he was not an advocate for France, but for the peace of England; an object which surely was worthy of the most exalted ambition. A degree of malignity, indeed, had characterized all the attacks made upon him. It had been said, that he derived all his arguments from the common stock of Brissot, who was, in another breath, pronounced by the same right honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) the Prince of pickpockets. Did he mean to say that his right honourable friend had any connection with M. Brissot? If this was his meaning, he asserted a most notorious falsehood.

Sir RICHARD HILL observed, if ever he should vote for an unnecessary war, sensible as he was of the miseries and calamities with which such a measure was always attended, he should think that his tongue deserved to be cut out; but the present war he considered as inevitable. But it had been said, why not treat with the French Convention for the purpose of preventing a war? Treat with the French Convention!--- He would as soon treat with the palace of Pandemonium!

Sir FRANCIS BASSET said, with respect to the fact that merchants, manufacturers, and labourers lamented the war, he had no doubt. They must all feel its consequences operate against their immediate interest. But they all, he would be bound to say, saw the necessity of the measure, and were prepared to support it, as undertaken for their common defence. Much of what had been said to-night appeared to him to have been obviated by what had been stated by a right honourable gentleman, Mr. Pitt, that this was a war, not for the purpose of any interference, but for the purpose of procuring reparation of those injuries and insults which had been offered to this country. He had been surprised to hear it alledged, that we were the aggressors in this war, when the fact was notorious, that, at the very moment when the French were professing their desire of being on a good understanding with Great Britain,

the Minister of the marine had written a letter to the friends of liberty and equality in the maritime towns, exciting them against this country, and proposing to land on our coasts an army with fifty thousand caps of liberty? With respect to himself, he had always been accustomed to act, he trusted, not inconsistently, with the right honourable gentleman, Mr. Fox. Notwithstanding this difference, however, he could not forbear to take this opportunity to express his very high opinion of the talents of that right honourable gentleman, and the no less high opinion which he entertained of his heart.

Sir GEORGE CORNWALL strongly urged the necessity of resisting the progress of French arms and principles.

Sir HENRY HOGHTON likewise spoke in support of the war.

Mr. FOX rose to reply. (There had been, for some time, a great clamour for the question, which was now violently renewed: ) he said, as he was determined to state what he had to say, the longer gentlemen chose to continue the noise, the more of their time would be consumed. He began with adverting to what had fallen from Mr. Powys: that honourable gentleman, who had lately chosen to distinguish himself by very particular attacks upon him, had stiled him an advocate for France. If he meant an advocate for what was just and right, so far he would allow himself to come under the description. But if he meant that he entered into the partialities and interests of an advocate, he begged to disclaim the character. The phrase was ambiguous; and the honourable gentleman, in applying it, knew, and perhaps intended that it should be taken up by the Public in the most invidious point of view.—That honourable gentleman had said, that he rejoiced that tonight the sense of the House was decidedly to be taken. If any thing could deter him from taking, as he proposed, the sense of the House, it was this mode of invitation, which was neither decent nor parliamentary. The right which had lately been insisted upon of a majority to know who were those who opposed them, was inconsistent with the usage and privileges of Parliament. He next adverted to what a right honourable gentleman, Mr. Burke, had alledged, that, according to his mode of reasoning, every thing which had happened in France

was just; and every thing done in opposition to them otherwise; because he had said, that the French were justifiable in declaring war against the Emperor of Germany, who had discovered hostile intentions towards them, he was therefore supposed to approve of all their proceedings in Brabant. Was this a fair conclusion? That right honourable gentleman had likewise stated, that he had adopted new principles of reasoning. It was new to state arguments against the country.—The arguments which he had stated were directed against the Ministry. And was it to be understood, that whenever Ministers were blamed, the country was censured? Were we, from our detestation of French Republicanism, come to that pitch of triple-refined despotism, that, to arraign the conduct of Ministry was to be represented as an attack upon the country? In that case, it would be better at once to shut the doors of that House, and dispense with the form of deliberating, when the substance was destroyed. It would be better, when a war was declared, to give up at once all the free part of the constitution, and to leave every thing to the absolute and arbitrary decision of Ministers. But, had the right honourable gentleman always acted upon the principle which he now wished to establish? Had he not, in 1778, thought proper to arraign the conduct of Ministry while the country was engaged in a war? There was another point on which he wished to touch: Ministers, whom, on the present occasion, the right honourable gentleman thought proper to support, had conceived it proper to make attempts to treat with the French. Why then should they escape the right honourable gentleman's censure, while he imputed as so great a crime to opposition the very wish to treat with that nation? Poland, it had been said, was a more remote object; but what sort of political morality was that which represented an object as less interesting, in proportion as it was more remote? Were all the charges of horror to be heaped upon the French, with a view of exciting indignation against them? And was the conduct of the Court of Berlin, which was still worse, to be passed entirely by? Were we to deal out our invectives in so large a proportion against the French, while with respect to the Court of Berlin we abstained from the smallest degree of censure? In that case, political morality, which had never been rated high in the opinions of men, would sink very low indeed. He considered

high rank or situation so far from being an extenuation, as affording an aggravation of the offence. Much had been said about treating with the present Executive Council of France: he would only remark, that in every country you must treat with those who have a power, unless you are bent on views of extirpation. Much, likewise, had been said of the influence of France: was the influence of France so formidable, and was the influence of Austria and Prussia nothing? An influence which had been this evening stated to have completely shut us out from the Republic of Europe, and to have deprived us of the means of saving Poland, however much we might have been inclined. An honourable gentleman had stated his motion to be insidious, and the reason which he had assigned was, that it partly assumed what had not been admitted in that House, and particularly mistated what had. He would inform that honourable gentleman that his motion had not the smallest connection with any thing that had been stated in that House, nor even could admit of the most distant allusion. It had been asked how his motion could have any tendency to bring about a peace? An honourable gentleman on the other side of the House had, with the candour of youth, admitted that nothing could more directly lead to peace than a precise ground being stated for the war. If the nature of the reparation which we desired was specified, the object was then precise, and, when it was obtained, war was at an end. But if his motion was not adopted, and if gentlemen went away with a doubt of the object which was aimed at by the war, it could not then be known to what length, or, under what pretences the war might be protracted. In the course of this night's discussion, one of these was, that the conduct of the Court of Berlin with respect to Poland had not been attempted to be vindicated. If Brissot was to be the object of so much invective, was the Court of Berlin to be exempted from censure? The more elevated the situation from which crimes proceeded, the more where they to be reprobated, the more pernicious was their example, and the more extensive that mischief with which they were attended. That a high situation should procure oblivion or impunity for crimes, was a maxim which no just, generous, or magnanimous mind would readily admit. He was not acquainted with M. Brissot, whom an honourable

gentleman had stiled the Prince of pick-pockets, but he always understood that any objections stated to his character, arose only from his public conduct. With respect to M. Chauvelin, he would likewise suggest to that right honourable gentleman to be very cautious in admitting accounts, as ground for his invective, which came from persons heated with the most violent personal enmity and political animosity. He had now finished his task *liberavi animum meum*. He had done all that he could do. He had been told that the part he had taken was not popular. No man was more desirous of popularity than he was; and no man would make less sacrifices to obtain it.— If the part which regard to the interests of the country obliged them to take, was not popular, it was not their duty to be influenced by that consideration. We had now got into a war; and how best to put an end to that war was the object which now demanded their attention. It was their business, treading the old constitutional ground, to come forward boldly with their opinions, in proportion to the importance of the crisis, and the danger of the country, and not to be deterred by the suggestions of timidity, the menace of unpopularity. It likewise gave him satisfaction that they had not ventured to come forward to give a negative to his motion, even amidst the general exultation which prevailed among the Members of that House, with respect to a war. He feared, he by no means wished, that this exultation in its event would have a termination similar to that which had been so emphatically described by the Roman historian, Tacitus, “*Spe laeta, tractatu dura eventus tristitia.*”

Mr. WINDHAM began with premising, that at so late an hour he would not attempt to detain the House, though he thought himself called upon to speak, as considering himself in some degree implicated in what had occurred in the course of the debate. He objected to the motion as ambiguously expressed. What was the interference which was here meant; and what the difference which had been alledged to subsist between Ministry and those who supported them with respect to interfering in the internal government of France? The phrase interference evidently admitted of different constructions. By interference, as it was used, they must evidently mean that interference in the internal government of a country, the ope-

rations of which were confined to itself ; and in this point of view it became a mere speculative and abstract question, without any application to the particular state of affairs. It had been a great question of morality among writers, how far any country was justified in interfering in the internal affairs of another ; and the only danger to result from establishing the doctrine seemed to be, that it might be of dangerous consequence, as proceedings which in one instance were dictated by pure benevolence, might serve as a cover to other interferences of a very different nature. When we talked of the internal government of France, we talked of it as it concerned ourselves ; we talked of the proceedings and principles in that country as affecting our own. When opinions were propagated by force of arms, it became necessary that they should be opposed.— When armies and navies were employed to disseminate principles, armies and navies became the proper means of resisting them. What then was the great difference between Ministers and those who supported them on this ground of internal interference ? For his part, he did not know that Ministers had assigned all the causes of the war. Another difference which had been stated between Ministers and those who supported them ; was, that while the former were actually attempting to treat, the latter had declared France not to be negotiable : but might not, in the case of those who concurred in one object, a difference of opinion take place with regard to the effects of a treaty ? Might they not be divided in their opinion of its success, and while one considered it as expedient and proper, the other regard it as useless and unavailing ? As to that point which had been so much insisted upon, that we should state the precise grounds of our going to war, and the object which we wished to attain, it was contended that there were not sufficient causes for going to war, but it was demanded that these causes should be expressly mentioned. With respect to war, he would remark, that it was a matter of extreme difficulty to give definitions in the outset ; and it would certainly be extremely ridiculous, by any previous declaration, to limit yourselves in your operations and means of acting, especially when opposed to an enemy who set no such bounds to themselves. It would be equally impolitic not to avail yourselves of any dissensions which might arise in the territories of the enemy, and it would

certainly be doing a service, both to the French themselves, and to the cause of humanity, to endeavour, if an opportunity presented itself, to establish in France a better form of government. The phrase *bellum internecinum*, which had so often been alluded to, he believed he had first made use of, and by it he meant, not a war for the extirpation of the enemy, but a war in which we ourselves have every thing at stake ; a war in which our dearest and most valuable interests were involved.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, that he was not surprised at the clamorous demand of the question, at the commencement of the speech of the honourable gentleman who had spoken last.—When his right honourable friend who had moved the question, had availed himself of his privilege of reply, it was to be supposed the debate was finished, and it was neither consistent with usage, nor fair and candid in the honourable gentleman, to attempt to say any thing more. Their friends, he must confess, treated them with a sort of French fraternity, and did them more real injury than their open enemies. The question, which the honourable gentleman had represented to be speculative and abstract, particularly applied to the present situation of the French. As to the right of the country to interfere in the internal government of another, upon the principle of pure benevolence, it would be found to be a doctrine, perhaps more specious in theory than safe in practice. He understood, however, that it was admitted by the best writers that no such right existed ; but let us look to the consequences of this principle of pure benevolence. From pure benevolence the Empress of Russia interfered in the internal affairs of Poland. From the same consideration the King of Prussia had possessed himself of Dantzick and Thorn. It was pure benevolence which induced the Spaniards to commit all those cruelties which had disgraced their establishments in the new world. Were such a right of one Government to interfere in the affairs of another admitted, it would be impossible to draw any line, or to fix its precise limits ; but the honourable gentleman, while he so much reprobated French principles, seemed to have adopted their conclusions, and was now exactly defending that line of conduct which the French had proposed by their decree of the 19th of November. In justifying, on a former occasion, the riots of Birmingham, he had adopted the reasoning of Rober-

spierre, when he vindicated the massacres of the 2d of September—that the persons who had suffered, had indeed done no mischief, but that had they not been crushed, they might have become extremely dangerous. It was not because they considered a negotiation as useless, that certain gentlemen, who supported the Minister, had disapproved of treating at all with France, but because they considered France as not negotiable. Ministers, in what they had said of a proposed conference between General Dumourier and Lord Auckland, had stated that it was perfectly consistent to treat with a General in time of war. So then we were to go to war for the sole purpose of making an opening for negotiation.

Mr. SMITH disapproved of a war, whether the object was to oppose French arms or French principles. In both cases, he considered a war as tending to increase the danger.

Mr. BURKE explained.

The House divided ; when there appeared,

For the previous question	—	270
Against it	—	44

Majority against Mr. Fox's motion 226

The House adjourned.

*Tuesday, 19th February.*

There not being a sufficient number of Members to form a ballot, the House adjourned.

*Wednesday, 20th February.*

Mr. T. GRENVILLE begged leave to call the serious attention of the House to the great inconveniences which had lately arisen, from want of the due attendance of Members on the days fixed for balloting for Committees on Election petitions. He had himself given much consideration to this subject, as connected with Mr. Grenville's act ; but it did not appear to him that it would be necessary or proper to make any alteration in that act, at least for the present. If it should afterwards seem proper to make alteration in it, he thought it would be much better to do so at the beginning of a new Parliament. There were still left on the table eleven election petitions, and an alteration in the law just now would make existing cases be tried by a posterior law.



If the House would exert the most vigorous powers with which it was at present invested, for enforcing the attendance of its Members, he was persuaded it would be no difficult matter to procure a proper attendance, so as to prevent the interruption of the business of the House ; and as he understood that to-morrow was an open day, he would move, that this House do to-morrow resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to consider of such steps as may be necessary for enforcing a due attendance of its Members on the days appointed for ballots on election petitions. Ordered.

The House adjourned.

*Thursday, 21st February.*

Mr. HOBART brought up the report of the Committee of Supply, and the resolutions agreed to by the Committee yesterday were read a first time. On the second reading of the resolution respecting the Staff Officers,

Mr. FOX observed, that it did not occur to him what should render necessary so large a staff in England, in the circumstance of the war in which we are at present engaged. The war before the last was one carried on very extensively, and which certainly had not been starved, and yet, according to his information, there was at present as large a staff in England alone, as we had during that war, in Great Britain, Ireland, Germany, and America. In his opinion, we ought to be more particularly careful as to increasing the army establishment, in officers of high rank.

The SECRETARY AT WAR did not think that we ought to look so much to any precedent, as to what might appear necessary for the vigorous support of those measures, which the present existing circumstances required, for the safety of the country.

Mr. COURTENAY said, that we had now about ten General Officers more than were in M. Dumourier's army, who commanded at least 200,000 men ; and although the honourable Secretary at War seemed unable to assign any reason for this vast disproportion of officers over the men, he thought he could assist him with a good one ; because, when known, he made no doubt that such a circumstance would immediately relieve the Dutch from all their apprehensions ; and he thought

it would be an excellent *coup de maitre* in Ministers, to publish in the Gazette a list of the General Officers, as a certain means of inducing M. Dumourier to raise the siege of Breda, and to give up every idea of proceeding to Amsterdam, though now within twenty miles of it.

The resolutions were then all read a second time, and agreed to.

Mr. GREY now rose, and said, that in moving the address to His Majesty, which he should now have the honour to propose to the House, he would adhere strictly to the promise he had made on a former night, not to take up their time by any previous speech. He could certainly hardly entertain a hope, after what had passed, that his proposition would be acceded to by the House, though he wished most ardently that it were possible, as it might still, perhaps, be the means of averting the calamities of war: but whatever might be its fate, he was anxious to come forward with an explicit declaration and avowal of his sentiments, and to court the distinction of being recorded as one of those who had, with every possible exertion, opposed those impolitic measures, whereby we had been plunged into a war, which was likely to be so ruinous and calamitous to this country. He then moved,

“ That an humble address be presented to His Majesty, to assure His Majesty that His faithful Commons, animated by a sincere and dutiful attachment to his person and family, and to the excellent constitution of this kingdom, as well as by an ardent zeal for the interest and honour of the nation, will at all times be ready to support His Majesty in any measures which a due observance of the faith of treaties, the dignity of his crown, or the security of his dominions, may compel him to undertake.

“ That feeling the most earnest solicitude to avert from our country the calamities of war, by every means consistent with honour and with safety, we expressed to His Majesty, at the opening of the present session, “ our sense of the temper and “ prudence which had induced His Majesty to observe a strict “ neutrality with respect to the war on the Continent, and “ uniformly to abstain from any interference in the internal “ affairs of France;” and our hope that the steps His Majesty had taken would have the happy tendency “ to render a firm

“ and temperate conduct effectual for preserving the blessings  
“ of peace.”

“ That, with the deepest concern, we now find ourselves obliged to relinquish that hope, without any evidence having been produced to satisfy us that His Majesty's Ministers have made such efforts as it was their duty to make, and as, by His Majesty's most gracious Speech, we were taught to expect, for the preservation of peace: it is no less the resolution than the duty of His Majesty's faithful Commons to second his efforts in the war thus fatally commenced, so long as it shall continue; but we deem it a duty equally incumbent upon us to solicit His Majesty's attention to those reasons or pretexts, by which his servants have laboured to justify a conduct on their part which we cannot but consider as having contributed, in a great measure, to produce the present rupture.

“ Various grounds of hostility against France have been stated, but none that appeared to us to have constituted such an urgent and imperious case of necessity as left no room for accommodation, and made war unavoidable. The Government of France has been accused of having violated the law of nations, and the stipulations of existing treaties, by an attempt to deprive the Republic of the United Provinces of the exclusive navigation of the Scheldt. No evidence, however, has been offered to convince us that this exclusive navigation was, either in itself or in the estimation of those who were alone interested in preserving it, of such importance as to justify a determination in our Government to break with France on that account. If, in fact, the States General had shewn a disposition to defend their right by force of arms, it might have been an instance of the truest friendship to have suggested to them, for their serious consideration, how far the assertion of this unprofitable claim might, in the present circumstances of Europe, tend to bring into hazard the most essential interests of the Republic. But when, on the contrary, it has been acknowledged that no requisition on this subject was made to His Majesty, on the part of the States General, we are at a loss to comprehend on what grounds of right or propriety we can take the lead in asserting a claim, in which we are not principi-

and in which the principal party has not, as far as we know, thought it prudent or necessary to call for our interposition.

“ We must farther remark, that the point in dispute seemed to us to have been relieved from a material part of its difficulty, by the declaration of the Minister of Foreign Affairs in France, that the French Nation gave up all pretensions to determine the question of the future navigation of the Scheldt. Whether the terms of this declaration were perfectly satisfactory or not, they at least left the question open to pacific negotiation; in which the intrinsic value of the object, to any of the parties concerned in it, might have been coolly and impartially weighed against the consequences, to which all of them might be exposed, by attempting to maintain it by force of arms.

“ We have been called upon to resist views of conquest and aggrandizement entertained by the Government of France, “ at all times dangerous to the general interests of Europe, “ but” asserted to be “ peculiarly so, when connected with “ the propagation of principles, which lead to the violation of “ the most sacred duties, and are utterly subversive of the peace “ and order of all civil society.”

“ We admit, that it is the interest and duty of every member of the commonwealth of Europe to support the established system and distribution of power among the independent sovereignties, which actually subsist, and to prevent the aggrandizement of any State, especially the most powerful, at the expence of any other; and, for the honour of His Majesty’s Councils, we do most earnestly wish, that his Ministers had manifested a just sense of the importance of the principle to which they now appeal, in the course of late events, which seemed to us to threaten its entire destruction.

“ When Poland was beginning to recover from the long calamities of anarchy, combined with oppression; after she had established an hereditary and limited monarchy like our own, and was peaceably employed in settling her internal government, His Majesty’s Ministers, with apparent indifference and unconcern, have seen her become the victim of the most unprovoked and unprincipled invasion; her territory overrun, her free constitution subverted, her national independence annihilated, and the general principles of the security of nations

wounded through her side. With all these evils was France soon after threatened, and with the same appearance either of supine indifference, or of secret approbation, His Majesty's Ministers beheld the armies of other powers (in evident concert with the oppressor of Poland) advancing to the invasion and subjugation of France, and the march of those armies distinguished from the ordinary hostilities of civilised nations by manifestoes, which, if their principles and menaces had been carried into practice, must have inevitably produced the 'return of that ferocity and barbarism in war, which a beneficent religion, and enlightened manners, and true military honour, have for a long time banished from the Christian world.'

"No effort appears to have been made to check the progress of these invading armies; His Majesty's Ministers, under a pretended respect for the rights and independence of other sovereigns, thought fit at that time to refuse even the interposition of His Majesty's councils and good offices, to save so great and important a portion of Europe from falling under the dominion of a foreign power. But no sooner, by an ever-memorable reverse of fortune, had France repulsed her invaders, and carried her arms into their territory, than His Majesty's Ministers, laying aside that collusive indifference which had marked their conduct during the invasion of France, began to express alarms for the general security of Europe, which, as it appears to us, they ought to have seriously felt, and might have expressed, with great justice, on the previous successes of her powerful adversaries.

"We will not dissemble our opinion, that the decree of the National Convention of France of the 19th of November, 1792, was in a great measure liable to the objections urged against it; but we cannot admit that a war, upon the single ground of such a decree, unaccompanied by any overt acts, by which we or our allies might be directly attacked, would be justified as necessary and unavoidable. Certainly not, unless, upon a regular demand made by His Majesty's Ministers of explanation and security in behalf of us and our allies, the French had refused to give His Majesty such explanation and security. No such demand was made. Explanations, it is true, have been received and rejected. But it well deserves to

be remarked and remembered, that these explanations were voluntarily offered on the part of France, not previously demanded on ours, as undoubtedly they would have been, if it had suited the views of His Majesty's Ministers to have acted frankly and honourably towards France, and not to have reserved their complaints for a future period, when explanations, however reasonable, might come too late, and hostilities might be unavoidable.

“ After a review of all those considerations, we think it necessary to represent to His Majesty, that none of the points which were in dispute between his Ministers and the Government of France appear to us to have been incapable of being adjusted by negotiation, except that aggravation of French ambition, which has been stated to arise from the political opinions of the French nation. These indeed, we conceive, formed neither any definable object of negotiation, nor any intelligible reason for hostility. They were equally incapable of being adjusted by treaty, or of being either refuted or confirmed by the events of war.

“ We need not state to His Majesty's wisdom, that force can never cure delusion ; and we know His Majesty's goodness too well to suppose that he could ever entertain the idea of employing force to destroy opinions by the extirpation of those who hold them.

“ The grounds, upon which His Majesty's Ministers have advised him to refuse the renewal of some avowed public intercourse with the existing Government of France, appeared to us neither justified by the reason of the thing itself, nor by the usage of nations, nor by any expediency arising from the present state of circumstances. In all negotiations or discussions whatsoever, of which peace is the real object, the appearance of an amicable disposition, and of a readiness to offer and to accept of pacific explanations on both sides, is as necessary and useful to insure success as any arguments founded on strict right. Nor can it be denied that claims or arguments of any kind, urged in hostile or haughty language, however equitable or valid in themselves, are more likely to provoke than to conciliate the opposite party. Deploring, as we have ever done, the melancholy event which has lately happened in France, it would yet have been some consolation to us to have heard that the

powerful interposition of the British nation on this subject had at least been offered, although it should unfortunately have been rejected. But, instead of receiving such consolation from the conduct of His Majesty's Ministers, we have seen them, with extreme astonishment, employing, as an incentive to hostilities, an event, which they had made no effort to avert by negotiation. This inaction they could only excuse on the principle, that the internal conduct of nations (whatever may be our opinion of its morality) was no proper ground for interposition and remonstrance from foreign states—a principle, from which it must still more clearly follow that such internal conduct could never be an admissible, justifying reason for war.

“ We cannot refrain from observing, that such frequent allusions as have been made to an event (confessedly no ground of rupture) seemed to us to have arisen from a sinister intention to derive, from the humanity of Englishmen, popularity for measures which their deliberate judgement would have reprobated, and to influence the most virtuous sensibilities of His Majesty's People into a blind and furious zeal for a war of vengeance.

“ His Majesty's faithful Commons, therefore, though always determined to support His Majesty with vigour and cordiality in the exertions necessary for the defence of his kingdoms, yet feel that they are equally bound by their duty to His Majesty, and to their fellow subjects, to declare, in the most solemn manner, their disapprobation of the conduct of His Majesty's Ministers throughout the whole of these transactions—a conduct which, in their opinion, could lead to no other termination but that to which it seems to have been studiously directed, of plunging their country into an unnecessary war. The calamities of such a war must be aggravated, in the estimation of every rational mind, by reflecting on the peculiar advantages of that fortunate situation which we have so unwisely abandoned, and which not only exempted us from sharing in the distresses and afflictions of the other nations of Europe, but converted them into sources of benefit, improvement, and prosperity to this country.

“ We, therefore, humbly implore His Majesty's paternal goodness to listen no longer to the Councils which have forced us into this unhappy war, but to embrace the earliest occasion,

which his wisdom may discern, of restoring to his People the blessings of peace."

Major MAITLAND seconded the motion.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, it was obvious that the substance of the address was nothing more than a repetition of those arguments which had been already brought forward in that House by gentlemen who opposed the measures of Government. It was only, therefore, necessary for him to say, that he, as well as every gentleman who had concurred in the late proceedings of that House, and in giving their support, in the present crisis, to the Executive Government, must, of necessity, give their decided negative to the motion of the honourable gentleman.

Mr. DRAKE said, that, to this voluminous, elaborate, circuitous address, which had been brought forward by the honourable gentleman in the way of a protest, the best answer which he could give was his decided No. To the proceedings of gentlemen on the other side of the House he had no doubt the People were nearly unanimous in uttering their No, while to the measures of Ministers they joined in emphatically pronouncing their Aye.

Mr. R. SMITH read a petition signed by about 2500 inhabitants of the town of Nottingham, stating, among other things, that as the Constitution now stands with respect to representation in Parliament, the country is amused with the name of a representation of the People, when the reality is gone; that the right of election had passed away from the People almost altogether; and that thereby the confidence of the People with respect to Parliament was weakened, if not destroyed. The petition, therefore, prayed the House to consider of the proper mode to effectuate a reform in Parliament, and suggested, as one part of a general plan of reform, that the right of election should be in proportion to the number of adult males in the kingdom. On the question being put for bringing up the petition,

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, that it was certainly extremely fair in the honourable gentleman who presented the petition to read the precise words of it to the House. It was with the House, however, to consider whether, after having heard it read, they could possibly allow the petition to be brought up,



consistently with what they owed to the support of their own dignity. He by no means intended to say any thing as to the propriety of what was demanded in the prayer of this petition : it was his decided opinion that every class of the People of this country have a fair right of petitioning for the redress of any supposed wrong, and that such petition ought to be received, whatever the House might think as to the propriety of the demand made in it ; but this demand ought surely to be made in a stile of respect to the House, and of reverence for the Constitution. There were some passages in this petition which he thought he had heard read by the honourable gentleman that appeared to him highly objectionable, and, on comparing what he had heard with a printed copy of the petition, which he had got on coming into the House, he found that he had not been mistaken. The first passage he alluded to was that which stated that the Constitution amused the country with the name of a representation of the People, when the reality was gone. The second stated that the right of the People had passed from them into other hands, and in fact denied both the right and power of that House as at present constituted : and the third declared, that the confidence of the People with respect to Parliament was thereby weakened, if not entirely destroyed.

These were expressions so disrespectful to the House, and so irreverent to the Constitution, that it appeared to him impossible that the House, consistently either with dignity or propriety, could allow the petition to be brought up in its present form, though he would not certainly think it right to refuse receiving any petition, whatever might be the object of its prayer, if expressed in proper and respectful terms.

Mr. FOX thought it far from usual to canvass, in so minute a manner, petitions presented to that House. In his opinion, it should be no part of their character to be apt to see and to take up every passage which could be construed into disrespect. If, however, on any occasion, they should be less nice than on another in that respect, it was in such a case as the present, where the object of the petition was to procure a reform in that House. The passages alluded to appeared to him to have a necessary connection with the prayer : its object is to state that there is, at present, no fair or proper representa-

tion of the People. In the passage which, as he thought, said no more than that the right of election had passed away improperly from the People, the petition seemed to be misapprehended by gentlemen, as if it denied the right and power of the House of Commons as now constituted. He did not say that he thought the prayer of the petition founded in just principles; he surely doubted much as to the idea of fixing the right of election in proportion to the number of adult males; but he would certainly give his vote for allowing the petition to be brought up. When the reasons stated in a petition were connected with its prayer, they must be mentioned, otherwise the prayer could not be introduced with any propriety; and even if totally unconnected with the prayer, the objectionable passages ought to be extremely strong before the House should, in his opinion, refuse to receive the petition. With respect to addresses to the Crown, he knew it had been held by some very eminent characters in this country that the subject's right in that respect was so sacred, that if it came in the proper form of a petition, it must be received, whatever might be the matter it contained. He could not himself go the length that that doctrine had been carried in the case of the Middlesex election; for in that case the petition went so far as to state, that the Parliament was altogether vitiated, and all its acts null, which was going a great deal farther than, according to any apprehension of his, the present petition does. Wherever the impropriety, if any, was, such as could be overlooked, he would be very desirous always of passing it over; and in this case he was clearly of opinion for allowing the petition to be brought up.

Mr. LAMBTON reminded the House of a case in which, though the disrespect was more glaring than in the present one, the House had not thought it a sufficient ground for refusing to receive the petition. The case to which he alluded was that of Mr. Horne Tooke, who, in his petition, said, that seats were purchased in the House of Commons as notoriously as stalls were hired at Smithfield. If ever there was disrespectful language it was this, and yet the petition which contained it was received.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS stated, that in the case of Mr. Horne Tooke this House went upon the idea that, being a pe-

tion complaining of an undue return, they were bound by the act of Parliament to receive it, whatever might be its contents ; though even in that case he was of a different opinion, and thought the House could not be bound to receive such a petition.

Mr. R. SMITH said, he thought it his duty to state to the House, that, having observed some passages in this petition which appeared to him rather strongly expressed, he mentioned to some of the most respectable subscribers his suspicion that the House might possibly consider them as disrespectful ; and it was but doing justice to them to say, that they would have wished to have taken out these passages, but they did not well see how it could be done, from the difficulty of collecting together no less than 2500 persons, for by so many was the petition signed ; he was, however, sure that they meant nothing disrespectful to the House.

Mr. D. PARKER COKE stated reasons why, in his opinion, this petition ought to be received, and why he should take the sense of the House upon it, if the right honourable gentleman who opened the debate should persist in opposing its reception. He admitted that the petition might have stated its object in better language, and so he had stated to several of the gentlemen who signed it ; they were men of honourable characters, and, on reflecting on what he said to them, expressed a wish that the objectionable parts of the petition could be expunged, for that nothing was farther from their intention than to offer an insult to the House of Commons, or to Government ; but that the vast number of persons who had signed the petition could not be again made acquainted with the alteration without being called together by a general meeting, the inconvenience of which would be very considerable ; and that was the reason why the expressions complained of were suffered to remain. He did not believe that the language of this petition was such as to preclude it from being received. It stated a certain departure in the practical part of the representative system of this Constitution. We all knew that there were boroughs for which the Crown, and others for which certain noblemen, had the nomination, and he knew they were very honourable men, and good Members of that House. He knew that his sentiments upon such subjects as the repre-

sentation of that House were different from many of the Members of that House, and from many of their constituents. He had often verbally and in writing held this language to his constituents, that he never would obey their orders as a Member of Parliament, but that he should always judge for himself, and act for himself; and although he had held that language, he had not lost the confidence of his constituents; and he thought that his opinion was no reflection on him as an individual. The House could not consistently refuse to receive this petition, unless it was libellous, and if it was libellous, they ought to prosecute its authors and advisers for a libel, and upon that point he begged leave to submit a few thoughts to the House. In the first place, he admitted that if the petition was presented to a Court of Law, the Judges might deem it to be a libel; but although formerly the mode of trying libels was to leave the fact to the Jury, and the law to the Judges, yet we all know that this practice was now altered, and the Jury were to decide upon both law and fact: in that view, therefore, he thought it was extremely probable that a Jury would acquit any person charged with a libel upon this petition. What would then be the case? Why, that the House of Commons had rejected a petition that was an innocent publication. On the other hand, if the House rejected this petition as an insult upon its dignity, it would follow, as a matter of course, that, to preserve that dignity, they ought to punish those who had offered to insult it. What then would be their situation? Why a Jury might acquit the persons so accused, and then the House would be subject to the imputation of being too tenacious of its dignity, and too inattentive to the rights of its constituents. All these inconveniencies would be avoided by receiving the petition. Nor were the Journals of the House without precedent upon this subject. He believed that in the year 1783 a petition was received much bolder and more irregular in its language than the present, where the House was stated to be a corrupt body. He believed that the petition of Mr. John Horne Tooke was also as offensive to the dignity of the House as this, or more so, much more so in his opinion, for he thought it was an open libel on the House, and the answer to it ought to have been that, in that shape, it could not be received, and yet the House received

that petition. The petition now before the House had for its object a parliamentary reform; on this point he knew there was a variety of opinions; for himself he would say, that he was of opinion that the House of Commons, constituted as it was, now answered all the purposes of a complete representation, and that an alteration in that respect could not enable the House to speak the language of the Public better than they did at present: he was not, however, positively against any attempt at a temperate reform; but there were ideas abroad upon the word reform, to which he was no friend, but a determined enemy, and which he should oppose as strenuously as he could, while he was a Member of Parliament. He said, an Assembly (the Friends of the People) had been formed, to which, and to the principles professed by its members, he would not subscribe. He thought it an assembly unfortunately formed; for that it had inculcated doctrines that were dangerous to the liberty of this country, and calculated to mislead the people. He had heard nothing of it lately, and he hoped its labours were nearly at an end. He concluded with observing, that he trusted the majority of the House would see the danger of appearing to contend with its constituents upon the right of petitioning—a dangerous contest; and therefore that they receive this petition at all events. If the opposition to it was persisted in, he must take the sense of the House upon the subject.

Mr. RYDER was against receiving the petition, merely because it was worded in a disrespectful manner, but by no means because he meant to contest the right of the subject to petition. On the contrary, he was for giving the present petitioners an opportunity of presenting the same prayer to the House, unaccompanied with observations degrading to the House.

Mr. BURKE observed, that with regard to the gentlemen who had signed the petition now under discussion, he did not consider them as criminal in any great degree; for the probability was, that the mass of them had never read it. The first question was, whether the House ought or ought not to receive it as it was? The advocates for the receiving of the petition had desired the House to keep its temper—in this they were very right; because they must be conscious they had taken

some pains to provoke the House. The petition itself appeared to him such as that House could not receive consistently with its own dignity, for the audacity of the language was such as should not be tolerated, and the seditious tendency of the whole of the petition was such, as might become in time dangerous if the petition was so far honoured as to be laid on the table of that House without punishing those who had advised the presenting such a petition; the better way therefore would be not to receive the petition at all, and to teach those who wished to petition that House, that they must do it in a respectful manner. This petition was only a small part of the fruit of the doctrine which had lately been propagated by certain societies, that England had no Constitution. If the House encouraged this, and suffered themselves to be thus insulted, they would soon be overpowered by a torrent of insolence running over their table, and they would be despised by the Public. Perhaps, indeed, when there was only a little indecorum to be observed in a petition, the good temper of the House might excuse it, but here indecorum was the smallest part of the offence; for it went the length of denying the authority of that House, as a representative body of the Commons of Great Britain. He knew, that in the time of Lord George Gordon's turbulence, the House received as bad a petition as the present; but that was not a time to be regarded, as an example for the present. He saw no reason whatever for receiving this petition; but he perceived an infinite number against its reception. He took notice of the Society for Constitutional Information, and hinted at others, all of whom, he observed, like the present petition, went to propagate the doctrine that there is no Constitution in this country; and he observed that the safety of the State required the authors of such principles to be punished. But this was not the time to inquire into the guilt or innocence of any individual; the question now was simply, whether the petition now before them, should be received or rejected, upon which he trusted the House had no difficulty.

Mr. GREY said, he agreed with the right honourable gentleman who spoke last, that this was not the time to debate on the prosecution of any individuals, composing this, that, or any other society, but simply whether the petition should be

received or rejected. The persons composing the Society to which he had alluded, and proceeding on the principles, and acting from the necessity which occasioned its original formation, were persons very well known to the Public, and men who had not departed, nor would depart, from the principles they originally professed. They had viewed and maturely considered the present state of the representation of this country, and they were clearly of opinion that it was not what it ought to be; hence the propriety of receiving the present petition.—Nor could the right honourable gentleman who spoke last be seriously of another; if he was, Mr. Grey said, he would refer the House to what that right honourable gentleman had himself said during the American war. When it was said, why might not America be virtually represented, as well as a great part of this country, “What,” exclaimed the right honourable gentleman, “when they wish to behold the divine face of the British Constitution, would you present to them its back, its shameful parts?” “Would you return to them the flough of our slavery as the model of their freedom?” Or if this was not sufficient, Mr. Grey said, he could refer the House to the subsequent language of the right honourable gentleman, now the Chancellor of His Majesty’s Exchequer, before he came into office.—“That it was notorious that the Nabob of Arcot had fifteen Members in that House, and that they did not act upon an identity of interest with the people.” After this he would appeal to the House whether they ought to be very nice in the language which they were to receive from their Constituents, and he warned them against the danger of laying it down as a principle that the Members of that House were to be allowed to say what their Constituents were not to be permitted to state in their petitions. He concluded with giving his assent to the present petition being received.

Mr. BURKE observed, that the honourable gentleman had furnished the House with some scraps of former proceedings; he belonged to a society of scrap-gatherers. There was a place in this town called Rag Fair——

The SPEAKER called Mr. Burke to order.

Mr. W. SMITH approved of receiving the petition, but expressed himself more anxious about the opinion the House

entertained of the gentlemen who signed the petition; in the name of many of them, he disclaimed all thought of insulting the House. He allowed also, that some of the expressions in the petition had better have been left out. He then stated the reason why these words were not expunged.

The MASTER OF THE ROLLS opposed the receiving of the petition.

Mr. SHERIDAN, after remarking that nothing was so likely to produce ill temper in certain gentlemen, as referring to the principles they had formerly maintained, hoped the House would not imitate the example of those gentlemen.— If they wished to be treated with respect by their constituents, their true course was to treat their constituents with respect. An honourable gentleman had observed, that a Society lately instituted for the avowed purpose of obtaining a parliamentary reform, was, as he trusted, come to the conclusion of its labours, as he had heard nothing of it for some time past. He could assure the honourable gentleman, that the Society alluded to (the Friends of the People) was neither dead nor sleeping, but in the full vigour of activity. Another honourable gentleman (Mr. Burke) who opposed bringing up the petition, did not seem to have the same ideas of virtual representation he had professed and published formerly. Having got on the subject of scraps, he would treat the gentleman who opposed bringing up the petition, with another scrap. On a former occasion, referring to the borough of Old Sarum, it had been said, that its streets were now only to be distinguished by the different colours of the corn that grew on the soil which it once occupied; and that its only manufacture was the manufacture of Members of Parliament. In the reign of Queen Elizabeth, a publication was laid before the Crown Lawyers as treason; they answered, it was not treason, but felony, for its contents were all stolen from other publications. Just so it was with the petition; its contents were all stolen from the declarations and speeches by which the Chancellor of the Exchequer had originally courted popularity. It was hard indeed if expressions, that had been applauded when spoken in the House of Commons were to be deemed inadmissible when adopted by the constituents of the House of Commons. He referred to the strong language of the petition of the city of London, on



the famous case of the Middlesex Election; said, that His Majesty's present Minister had given the model of Associations for Parliamentary Reform, as it could make no difference whether resolutions were dated from the Thatched House, or from the Free Mason's Tavern; and concluded with supporting the petition's being brought up.

Colonel HARTLEY thought, that in the present circumstances, the House could not hold up their dignity too high; and was against receiving the petition.

Mr. WIGLEY spoke also against the petition.

The House divided,

For receiving the petition	21
Against receiving it	109
	<hr/>
Majority	88

The House adjourned.

LIST of the MINORITY on the Motion of Mr. FOX, on  
Monday the 18th instant.

MEMBERS	SIT FOR
Rt. Hon. C. J. Fox,	Westminster,
Charles Grey, Esq.	Northumberland,
R. B. Sheridan, Esq.	Stafford,
Hon. T. Erskine,	Portsmouth,
Lord John Russell,	Tavistock,
Lord William Russell,	Surry,
Earl of Wycombe,	Chipping Wycombe,
Hon. St. Andrew St. John,	Bedfordshire,
Hon. T. Maitland,	Jedburgh, &c.
Hon. P. C. Windham,	Midhurst,
W. Plumer, Esq.	Hertfordshire,
Rt. Hon. Rd. Fitzpatrick,	Tavistock,
William Baker, Esq.	Hertfordshire,
Dudley North, Esq.	Great Grimsby,
John Courtenay, Esq.	Tamworth,
M. A. Taylor, Esq.	Poole,
Henry Howard, Esq.	Arundel,
S. Whitbread, jun. Esq.	Bedford,
James Hare, Esq.	Knareborough,
W. Powlett Powlett, Esq.	Totness,
W. Hussey, Esq.	Salisbury,
B. Vaughan, Esq.	Calne,
W. Smith, Esq.	Camelford,
P. Francis, Esq.	Blechingly,
Colonel Macleod,	Invernesshire,

## MEMBERS.

## SIT FOR

Joseph Jekyll, Esq.  
 Rt. Hon. Lord R. Spencer,  
 T. W. Coke, Esq.  
 Edward Coke, Esq.  
 R. Wilbraham, Esq.  
 J. R. Burch, Esq.  
 C. C. Western, Esq.  
 J. B. Church, Esq.  
 J. Harrison, Esq.  
 W. Colhoun, Esq.  
 T. Whitmore, Esq.  
 Hon. E. Bouverie,  
 J. C. Crespiigny, Esq.  
 Sir E. Winnington, Bt.  
 C. Taylor, Esq.  
 C. Sturt, Esq.  
 T. Thompson, Esq.  
 W. Lee Antonie, Esq.  
 D. Howel, Esq.

Calne,  
 Wareham,  
 Norfolk,  
 Derby,  
 Bodmyn,  
 Thetford,  
 Malden,  
 Wendover,  
 Great Grimsby,  
 Bedford,  
 Bridgnorth,  
 Northampton,  
 Sudbury,  
 Droitwich,  
 Maidstone,  
 Bridport,  
 Evesham,  
 Great Marlow,  
 St. Michael's.

## TELLERS.

W. Adam, Esq.  
 W. H. Lambton, Esq.

Rossshire,  
 Durham.

*Friday, 22d February.*

The order of the day being read for going into a Committee of the whole House, to consider of the means of procuring a due attendance of Members on the days fixed for balloting for Committees on controverted elections; the Speaker left the chair, and Sir George Cornwall took his seat at the table.

Mr. T. GRENVILLE began with mentioning the respect that was due to the act, by which the matter under consideration is at present regulated, and on which he did not now intend to propose any alteration. He was sorry to be called upon to fix the attention of the Committee on the absolute necessity of their taking some steps to enforce a due attendance on days fixed for ballots; several petitions, presented so long ago as the beginning of the present Parliament, being still undetermined. He had no doubt that part of the inconvenience which had of late arisen from the non-attendance of Members, was owing to the pressure of the times; but if so, it was the more necessary to provide an immediate remedy, both because the evil was likely to increase, and from the danger of hazarding, at this time, the interruption of public business. It was his wish to

accommodate the difficulty with as little inconvenience as possible. There appeared to him only two possible remedies ; either an alteration of the law, or the enforcing a due attendance. He was in hopes to be able to digest and bring forward such alterations on the present act as may be of important benefit ; but as these would only operate at the commencement of a new Parliament, he did not think it right to propose them till then. Besides, were they at present to alter the law, it would lead to a presumption that the execution of it is impracticable. Was it so, he would ask, on any other consideration than the want of due attendance in Members of that House ? And could any plan be devised, whereby the merits of controverted elections could be tried, without requiring from Members much attention and attendance ? He had heard, indeed, a plan mentioned of trying them by a foreign Judicature, not composed of Members of that House, but of that he could by no means approve ; he should regret any alteration in the existing law, proceeding on a supposition of the impracticability of procuring attendance ; for, with what face could they say to their constituents, that a beneficial law must be altered, because they do not do their duty. The remedy which he should propose was, a call of the House. There remained, he said, on the table, eleven petitions ; four of which had been presented at the beginning of the present Parliament ; and sorry he was that they were yet to be tried. Three of them had come in since the commencement of the Parliament ; and four of them were petitions respecting rights, some of which last were fixed for a late day. Of the seven petitions complaining of undue returns, it was probable that the one respecting Luggershall would go off altogether ; and although he did not speak from authority, yet he understood that the one respecting Sudbury would not probably occupy much time. It was his intention, therefore, to propose, that the call of the House should be on Wednesday the 6th of March, and that the two ballots, which are now fixed for Tuesday and Thursday next, should be postponed till the day after the call, and that the ballots for Cricklade, Poole, and Pontefract, should be fixed for Tuesday the 12th of March, by which means the pressure of the call would continue for no more than six days. He concluded with moving the following seven resolutions :

1. " That it is the opinion of this Committee, that it is  
" highly adviseable that the House should take such steps as  
" may conduce to the most speedy trial of the several petitions  
" complaining of undue elections, or returns of Members to  
" serve in Parliament, in order that, as far as may be, they  
" should be tried and determined in the present session of Par-  
" liament.

2. " That it is the opinion of this Committee, That this  
" House should be called over on Wednesday, the 6th day of  
" March next.

3. " That it is the opinion of this Committee, That such  
" Members as shall not then attend, be sent for in custody of  
" the Serjeant at Arms attending this House.

4. " That it is the opinion of this Committee, That  
" the several petitions complaining of an undue election and  
" return for the borough of Shaftesbury, now ordered to be  
" taken into consideration on Tuesday next, the 26th instant,  
" and also, the several petitions complaining of an undue  
" election and return for the borough of Great Grimsby, now  
" ordered to be taken into consideration on Thursday the 28th  
" day of this instant February, should be taken into considera-  
" tion on Thursday the 7th day of March next; and that the  
" several petitions complaining of an undue election and re-  
" turn for the Borough of Cricklade, now appointed for  
" Tuesday the 5th day of March next, and also, the several  
" petitions complaining of an undue election and return  
" for the borough of Poole, now appointed for Thursday the  
" 7th day of March next, should be taken into considera-  
" tion on Tuesday the 12th day of March next, before the  
" consideration of the petition complaining of the Pontefract  
" Election now appointed for that day.

5. " That it is the opinion of this Committee, That on the  
" above recited days now appointed for the consideration of  
" the several petitions above-named; viz. on Thursday the 7th  
" day of March next, and on Tuesday the 12th day of March  
" next, or on any other day in this session of Parliament, on  
" which any of the above-named petitions shall be ordered to  
" be taken into consideration, and the House shall have pro-  
" ceeded to the appointment of a Select Committee for the  
" trial of any of the above-named petitions, and the names of

“ the Members shall be drawn and called for that purpose,  
“ Mr. Speaker should direct the name of every Member so  
“ called, who shall be absent from the House, to be set aside;  
“ and that a list should be made of the names of such absent  
“ Members to be reported by Mr. Speaker to the House on  
“ next sitting day.

6. “ That it is the opinion of this Committee, That, upon  
“ the report of the list of the names of such absent Members,  
“ the Members, for whose non-attendance, on the appoint-  
“ ment of any such Select Committee, a sufficient excuse  
“ shall not be made and allowed by the House, should be  
“ forthwith ordered to be taken into the custody of the Serjeant  
“ at Arms attending this House, and should not be discharg-  
“ ed out of custody, without the special order of the House.

7. “ That it is the opinion of this Committee, That the  
“ House should require, that strict proof should be given of  
“ the facts and circumstances which shall be alledged in excuse  
“ for the non-attendance of any Member, on the appointment  
“ of any such select Committee, as is above described.”

Earl WYCOMBE said, he was by no means an admirer of the existing act of Parliament for trying contested elections; but still he allowed it was not without merit; it was, however, not a positive, but a comparative merit; the judicature which this act established was better than that which it had abolished. But if there was any thing in it which he liked better than another, it was that it did not compel the attendance of any individual Member: he himself had hitherto attended very regularly on balloting days; but it was because he was left to act as a free agent, and his attendance was regular, because it was voluntary. He judged of others by himself, and as he disliked compulsion, he presumed it was no less disagreeable to others; and therefore he considered the plan proposed as extremely objectionable.

Mr. FOX differed entirely from the noble Lord, and rather thought the compulsion did not go far enough. He was himself one of the minority who opposed Mr. Grenville's bill; but he had now altered his opinion of it, and thought the framer merited a well-earned praise. The principal objection to it was, the stopping of public business; but it could hardly have been foreseen, that gentlemen would sit in their rooms, and al-

low all public business to stand still, especially at so very important a crisis, and he was sorry it should have so happened. No ballot, during the whole of this session, had taken place on the day for which it had been fixed, and one had been delayed so long as from Tuesday to the Monday following. He stated very forcibly the great inconvenience arising from this, both with respect to public business, and the interest of the private parties concerned; and said that, in his opinion, such compulsion as might enforce attendance, would be convenient for gentlemen themselves; as nothing could be more unpleasant than the uncertainty which had hitherto taken place as to the time when any business would come on. He trusted, that the alterations, which his honourable friend had intimated his intention to bring forward in the present existing law, would have the effect to prevent those evils which are now so much felt; and of which, the report the House had heard that day, furnished a most melancholy instance; two gentlemen had sat in the House for no less than three sessions, who had no right whatever to be there; while the real representatives were during all that time deprived of their seats in the House. He did not wish to go into the subject of virtual representation; but what could gentlemen think of a returning officer, dividing a Parliament with the electors, and having the first three years too, which is the most certain half! It was an evil of the most alarming nature: and he hoped the bill intended to be brought forward by his honourable friend Mr. Grenville, in the outset of a new Parliament, would go to the insuring a determination upon all controverted elections, at the very beginning of a Parliament: the public benefit would be immense; and he was certain, gentlemen would find the sitting on one Committee at the beginning of a Parliament, and being insured from any after trouble, to be far less burdensome than what they are at present subjected to. As to the petitions now before the House respecting rights, he was anxious that they should not go over to another session; because, although in any other view, the speedy determination of them was not of so urgent importance, as of the petitions complaining of returns, yet they were an equal interruption to business. As to what had been hinted of the idea of a foreign judicature having cognizance in such cases, he highly disapproved of it, and it was entirely in oppo-

The House was at last resumed, and Sir George Cornwall immediately reported the above resolutions, to all of which the House agreed, except the one, on which the above conversation took place; <sup>8</sup> the motion of Mr. Pitt, it was ordered that this resolution should be recommitted on Tuesday, when he said, he would move an amendment to it; which would answer the end that he had already stated.

Mr. M. A. TAYLOR now rose, and said, he was aware that scarce any motions could gentlemen on his side of the House make, to which the epithets of factious and seditious might not, and had not been indiscriminately applied; he would not, however, now embark in a discussion of this kind: It would be difficult, he thought, to apply such arguments to the present case (if epithets of that kind deserved the name of arguments). In what he was now going to say, he could not be called the advocate of France, he would be in truth the advocate of Englishmen. The question was precisely this, whether in the very heart and body of the country, a large standing army was to be kept up, and in a way totally unusual, as well as highly alarming. He would not think it necessary to go into any argument, as to standing armies in general: it must, however, be admitted, that in no free country could a large standing army be kept up, without danger to liberty. History affords innumerable instances of States being modelled by armies: in this country, the same army which raised Cromwell to the Protectorate, restored Charles the Second. Those distinguished characters who led the glorious revolution, thought it necessary to establish, by the declaration of rights, that no standing army should be kept up without consent of Parliament; and, were the case otherwise, the doors of this House might as well be shut up: it was however, without much difficulty, that they got King William III. to disband his forces. With regard to the peace establishment in this country, it had continued nearly the same during the present reign; but it had increased much since the time of Queen Anne: it now amounted to 18,000 men, which appeared to him much too large, and it would be still much more alarming if the proposition he was about to make should not be agreed to. He had great fears, too, that this was not all the peace establishment which was intended to be kept up; for he observed, in a circular letter

from the Secretary to the officers who had been appointed to raise independent companies, that these officers were ordered to go on and compleat their companies, although the armament should not proceed; which seemed to give much reason for apprehending an increased peace establishment. Four arguments he understood to be brought forward in favour of the army. The first was, that great trust ought to be put in the officers. In answer to this he would say, that however much he respected the character of British officers, and no man did it more, yet he could not help entertaining a jealousy that their being so very much dependant on the Crown might render them too much attached to it; he was himself constitutionally attached to the Crown as much as any man. But as officers were not only dependant on the Crown with respect to promotion, but were liable to be dismissed from the service by its bare *fiat*, without being allowed a trial by Court-Martial, which right of the Crown had been lately exercised on account of bare speculative opinions alone, it was but a fair conclusion to draw, from the nature of man, that they may probably be too much attached to the Crown: and even, whatever there might be in this, he would go much farther, and would say plainly, that he would trust no man. It is said, in the second place, that the Mutiny bill passes only once a year, and he was glad of it. During the continuance of war, it would surely be far from his wish, that any alteration should be made in that act; but he hoped, on the return of peace, it would be accurately revised and amended, for it appeared to him to have been very hastily and incorrectly penned; which opinion Judge Blackstone has strongly expressed. In the third place it is said, that the army is only voted for a year: but how do these votes pass now? Formerly the Secretary at War, on bringing forward the vote of the army, thought it always necessary to make a speech of some length, stating the particular grounds which rendered the vote necessary: but, now, it generally passes altogether as a matter of course.

The fourth argument, with respect to the army, relates to the question now before the House. In truth, the connection between the soldier and the citizen has been the reason why a standing army has been permitted to exist in this kingdom.—Mr. Taylor here alluded to the opinions of Mr. Harley and



Mr. Pulteney, who expressed, in the strongest possible language, their ideas of the danger that must arise to the Constitution and to liberty, from quartering soldiers in barracks, and dissolving or lessening their connection with the body of the people. But, said Mr. Taylor, these two great men might perhaps be considered to have been patriots like himself, and of course be little regarded. He would beg leave, therefore, to appeal to Mr. Pelham, against whom the same objection could not possibly lie, if the title of patriot is to be appropriated to those alone, in opposition to the government of the day; and Mr. Pelham's opinion, which he read to the House, was not less decisive on this subject. These were surely good authorities. He would mention another opinion given by Lord Gage in 1739, which went a great deal farther than he meant to carry the argument. Speaking against the augmentation of the troops, Lord Gage said that one thing (meaning the quartering soldiers in barracks, and cutting off their connection with the people) he considered as of all others the most fatal, and that it would give the finishing stroke to liberty. If this, (said Lord Gage) should ever be attempted, it would become the duty of the people to draw their swords, as the last effort for liberty, and never to sheath them, till they had brought the authors and contrivers of the measure to condign punishment. Mr. Taylor said, he could not pass over another writer famous for his sound judgement, as well as for his candour and humanity, in treating of military subjects, he meant Judge Blackstone, who says that "the soldiers should live intermixed with the people; no separate camp, no barracks, no inland fortresses should be allowed." In the argument which he was now maintaining, he had on his side the ancient and rooted prejudices of the people, as well as the reason of the thing itself, and all the weight of the high authorities he had mentioned. What did he meet opposed to these? Nothing, but a set of new-fangled opinions—First, it is alledged that it is a great hardship on inn-keepers to quarter soldiers on them. He believed it might, and that they thought it so; but, for what reason? Because the price paid for hay and straw has not been raised for many years: if part of the large sums expended on building barracks, were applied towards a reasonable increase of the price paid for hay and straw, the innkeepers would be

glad to have them. 2dly, barracks are said to be necessary, to keep the minds of the soldiers, at the present moment, from being prejudiced and poisoned: but the experience of ages has evinced, that no walls are high enough to keep out opinions. Officers, however, may perhaps say, that, in barracks, better discipline can be preserved: much rather would he wish to see the army placed on constitutional ground; were it even attended with a little relaxation, from the most rigid discipline: but, in point of fact, are not the army out of barracks, well disciplined? But these arguments, however strong, were neither the only ones on his side of the question, nor were they those which, in this case, pressed most forcibly upon his mind.

For the whole system of Ministers shewed an evident preconcerted design to curb and overawe the people by the bayonet and the sword, instead of applying, if necessary, the wholesome correction of the laws of England; and this, in his conscience, he believed to be their intention. Barracks are said to have done no hurt hitherto; but they have been only erected in seaports, and he believed in some places about London and Westminster. So far indeed as his information went, it led him to believe, that the discipline of soldiers in barracks, is worse than when out of barracks. At Chatham, where he occasionally went, he understood that no farther back than about three weeks since, the soldiers there had behaved so riotously and improperly, that the commanding officer, on a representation from the inhabitants, had found it necessary to forbid them the use of side arms. Mr. Taylor confessed he was much alarmed; but he was told that there is no danger, because the right honourable gentleman opposite to him is a Constitutional Minister, and he has certainly made many elaborate declarations on the beauties of the Constitution: he could not, however, help considering the maxim to be equally just in politics as in religion, that "by their deeds you shall know them." If he saw the excise laws extended, could he help thinking it a little degradation from the cause of general liberty? Since the vote of that House some years ago, "That the influence of the Crown had increased, is increasing, and ought to be diminished," that influence had alarmingly increased: we are now going altogether from liberty: we have

engaged in war for the support of despotism: men have been dismissed from the service of the Crown, on account of abstract speculative opinions: associations have been formed on the most dangerous and unlawful principles, and for the worst purposes: We are going from the standard of the Constitution to the standard of the Crown: If we go to Church to perform the sacred duties of religion, we hear canting priests talking of passive obedience and divine right: probably because my opinions on these subjects are different, I may be anathematised as in the gail of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity. He did not incline to enter into any argument with respect to the King's rights, in virtue of his prerogative, of erecting barracks; but, before proceeding to erect them, it was undoubtedly the duty of His Majesty's Ministers to have informed the House of their intention to do so, and of the reasons which induced them to think it a measure either prudent or necessary. It had been the uniform desire of the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) to lower the spirit of inquiry in that House; all he thinks proper to ask of them is, to pay for what is already done; but they must not inquire the reason for which it is done. In the present instance, the ground intended for the purpose was purchased, and the barracks erected in summer, and the right honourable gentleman endeavoured to smuggle them through the House. [Here there was a murmur of dissent from the opposite side of the House.] Mr. Taylor repeated, that Mr. Pitt had endeavoured to smuggle them through the House. Did he not do so, when he had first purchased ground and erected barracks, and only came to that House with a demand for defraying the expence? What was then left for the House to do? This appeared to him to be a great constitutional question; and he thought it highly dangerous, that barracks should be erected entirely at the pleasure of the Crown. He said that in the motion which he should take the liberty to submit to the House he should adopt the words of Judge Blackstone, and he concluded with moving, That it is the opinion of this House that the uniform and persevering opposition of our ancestors from time to time, to the erecting of barracks in this country, was founded upon a just sense of the true principles of our most excellent constitution, and that the opinion has been justified, upon high legal and political autho-

rity, " That the foldiers fhould live intermixed with the people, " in order that they might be connected with them ; and that " no feparate camp, no barracks, no inland fortreffes, fhould " be allowed."

Sir GEORGE YONGE faid, that at the time that jealousy alluded to by the honourable gentleman had been fhewn in this country of a ftanding force, there had prevailed a much greater alarm than at prefent of the confequences with which fuch a force might be attended. If there was now any caufe for jealousy, the Houfe had to confider whether it was fanned by any want of care or wifdom on their part. There were one or two expreffions which had fallen from the honourable gentleman, to which he muft advert, and which refpected a body of men, whom he muft always honour, and to whose character he confidered himfelf as bound upon every occafion to do juftice. Thofe were the officers of the army, whom the honourable gentleman had defcribed as more immediately dependant upon the Crown, to which they looked for their promotion. But why were they to be confidered excluſively in this light? Did not officers of the navy look to the crown for promotion? Did not gentlemen of the law likewise look for promotion to the ſame quarter? Why then were Officers of the army to be represented as more immediately dependant upon the Crown, a reproach which he muft confider as equally illiberal and unfounded. The honourable gentleman had faid, that he ſpoke to the prejudices and jealousies of the Britiſh nation ; this certainly was the caſe ; he ſpoke to the prejudices and jealousies of former times, but not to prejudices and jealousies which now exiſted. The meafure which had been adopted of erecting barracks was neceſſary to the ſecurity of the kingdom. He regretted, that of late years in ſeveral inſtances the civil power had not been able to exerciſe its authority without calling in the aid of the military. This had particularly been the caſe at the preſent time. It was neceſſary, therefore, to have the ſoldiers ſo diſpoſed of, that they could ſpeedily be called together, and ready to act with moſt effect. After all, what had by the honourable gentleman ſometimes been called barracks and ſometimes fortreffes, were in a great many places only ſtables for putting up the horſes. Thoſe places of the country in which troops had been ſtationed, ſo far from feeling the alarm and

jealousy which had been described by the honourable gentleman, were, on the contrary, actuated by very different sentiments, and had expressed themselves highly satisfied with this salutary precaution, and the provision which was thereby made for their internal tranquillity and security.

Mr. MINCHIN confessed that he also saw no danger in the measure which had been so much objected to by the honourable gentleman who had spoken first. He thought it, on the contrary, attended with many advantages. And first it relieved a certain description of men from a grievous tax, which, during last war had been so very oppressive that several publicans had given up their licences. It was likewise a measure very favourable to the exact observance of discipline. For though soldiers were at stated hours obliged to retire to their quarters, yet when they were quartered in a public house, this regulation could not be enforced. For in that case, when the officers went to bed, the soldiers might take the opportunity to leave their quarters, and might be engaged in riots or mischiefs, which there were no means of discovering or preventing. But this could not occur in barracks, which were equally conducive to the health and morals of the troops lodged in them.—In public houses the soldiers were continually exposed to the temptation of expending that pay which might procure them solid nourishment, for obnoxious liquors, equally pernicious to their constitution and morals. With respect to the utility of barracks, he referred to the example of a sister kingdom (Ireland) where they had been always in use. There so much were their beneficial effects experienced, that those towns, where they were not erected, even made application for them, and could not be satisfied without such an establishment.

Major MAITLAND said, that he waited patiently for some time to hear the two honourable gentlemen who had defended the system of barracks, because he had a curiosity to hear what they had to say upon the subject, and on what ground it was that a plan so new could be supported, and why it should be adopted. But after all that he had heard from the honourable Secretary at War, whose situation gave him an opportunity of knowing much upon the subject, and also all that he had heard from the grave orator who spoke last, he was more at a loss to form an opinion than he was before he had heard them. He

was not only to look for a cause of the measure in question, but also for the mode in which it was to be carried on. If the measure itself was offensive to those who wished for the welfare of the people of this country, the mode by which that measure was to be carried on was not less so. It was a system which was dangerous in itself, for it compelled all its objects to look to the King only, instead of looking, as every one should look, that was ultimately to be supported by the people, to all the three branches of the Legislature, King, Lords, and Commons. How did they apply this observation? Was not His Majesty to have the direction of all his army? Most certainly he was: but this was not the whole of the case; for it was well known to the House, that last session His Majesty had allowed—(and here he begged to remark, that he was not speaking of His Majesty, as acting of his own mind; but in the constitutional language of this country, by the advice of his Ministers, who alone are responsible in such cases) His Majesty, he said, had allowed an additional sum of money for the payment of the army, without consulting that House. This, under the qualification he had given already, he said, was irregular, however Ministers had thought fit to advise His Majesty to do so. It was their system to act in a manner independent of that House, and to render its function as nominal as possible. This step was part of that system. Another part of the same system, was that of the measure now under consideration, the building of barracks; this might be called a sort of punishment, and he feared the soldiers would see and feel in that manner. The building of the barracks ought to have been submitted to, and the whole plan of it laid before the House, because as the money was to come out of the pockets of their constituents, the Members of that House were the only persons fit to judge of the propriety or impropriety of the measure; and they were the only persons who had, by the constitution, a right to decide upon the subject. But Ministers had no respect for the constitution in this respect; they undertook to do any thing they pleased, and afterwards came to Parliament to call upon them to pay the expence of it. Thus far he had spoken of the mode, and objected to it; he had still more objection to the measure itself. It had been defended, as some might think, by the two honourable gentlemen by argu-

ments ; he confessed he did not feel himself able to answer these arguments, because he was at a loss to recollect that they had made use of any, at least, that required any answer. As to the point taken notice of in the opening of this subject by his honourable friend, that the officers of the army being more connected with the Crown, were therefore more jealously to be regarded. On this point he differed from his honourable friend ; for he was sure, that if the Crown did but act properly with them, there never would be any occasion to say any thing against the public principles of the army. If the contrary should be the case, and the hour should come when military merit should be totally disregarded, and the army should feel that impression, and know by experience that Government attended to private interest in the disposition of all its promotions in the army, (as of late there was too much reason to complain) dreadful indeed would be the situation of the country. If it should be once felt as a general principle, that those who had bled in the field, and endured all the hardships of a military life for years, were to be neglected, and that others were to be advanced who had no military merit, for no reason assigned, but for well-understood reasons, which it was not convenient to avow, (which he could not help saying had in some degree been the case) then he would say that this country might be in danger. With regard to the mutiny bill, on which the whole of the military authority of this country depended, he must allow that it imposed some degree of slavery on the soldiers, but not an iota more than was absolutely requisite for the purposes of military discipline.

As to the argument, that the situation of this country was such, as to justify the civil officers to call in the assistance of the military, nay, that such assistance had been often wanted, this was of a piece with the other part of the conduct of Ministers ; for they had already endeavoured to spread sham alarms throughout every part of the kingdom, of sedition, insurrections, and rebellions ; and this they did, that they might with the greater ease plunge this country into a war ; but he called upon any of the Officers of the Crown now to state any of these seditions, or disposition to rebellion, in this country, or the necessity there was for calling forth the alarm of the people at large upon the subject.

With respect to our having our military in barracks, he granted, that if Ministers could state any necessity, the measure ought to be adopted, because there were, in certain cases, some advantages to be derived from that mode of keeping the military in readiness ; but we must likewise remember the disadvantages to which that mode subjected us, and therefore, before Parliament should sanction the measure, great attention should be paid to it ; as to the point of mere discipline, he did not think that barracks were necessary ; he was, indeed, of a contrary opinion ; and as to the idea of taking the army away from the mass of the people, for the sake of improving their health and morals, he could not agree with the honourable gentleman who had spoken upon that subject. Indeed no man could pay too high a compliment to the character of the British army ; he believed that in truth they were superior to any other upon earth ; and why ?—Because they stood upon a different footing from all other soldiers in the world. Because they were deeply interested in the country for which they were enlisted , because not one of them was a soldier merely, but united the two characters of citizen and soldier. But if they were to be put into barracks, that would tend to take away from them the most valuable part of the character, that of citizen ; which was indeed the most valuable character of every British subject. He could not here suppress an observation made on the character of the English soldiers by the late King of Prussia, who said he never could reduce them to discipline, but that they were such as could beat any disciplined troops in the universe. This the Major said he would prove them to be ; but it appeared to him that the mode adopted by Government was to destroy this union of the characters of citizen and soldier ; and he could not help considering them in some measure separated. It was against the principles of the constitution that officers, against whom no objection could be made on the score of military merit, should be removed and dismissed from the service upon points of speculative opinion, as had lately been the case. He could not, he said, help lamenting that this made part of the system to reduce the army to a mere machine, to be disposed of at the will and caprice of the executive Power, or rather at the mercy of the Minister ; it was a plan perfectly new, and different from every thing that had been adopted before. He had



heard much said against reform at the present time, but little did he think that the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) was commencing a reform, or rather an alteration, in the Constitution, and that too for the purpose of increasing the power of the Crown, against the rights and privileges of the subject. He concluded with giving his hearty assent to the motion.

Lord BEAUCHAMP observed, that it appeared rather extraordinary to him that the present occasion should be taken to object to barracks, at a time when there was nothing before the House to lead to that inquiry. They had not any estimate upon the table relative to the expence, and why should the honourable gentleman enter into the discussion of the subject before the House were at all acquainted with the extent of these barracks? His Lordship observed, that the honourable gentleman who opened the debate had said, in order to give colour to his observation, that the building of barracks, as it was now to be carried on, was a new system, and that the doctrine of its necessity in this country was new; whereas the plan of building barracks had been known, and barracks had been erected many years ago. This was not the first time when the discussion of barrack building had taken place; and it had on these occasions been invariably determined, that His Majesty had the unquestionable right of taking it upon himself; and he believed there was not an instance in which it had been necessary to come to that House for its previous approbation. His Lordship then said, that, in his opinion, it was no objection, in such a country as this, that a thing of this sort was new; for there was no country, in his opinion, which could be stationary in its politics. But he did not admit, that, in point of fact, this was a deviation in policy from the ancient system of this country; besides, if other countries changed their system of policy, it was necessary that Great Britain should do the same thing. He observed, as to the situation of this country in the time of King William, upon which so much stress had been laid, and the difficulty that Prince had to keep up his army, owing to the jealousy the people of this country had against standing armies, the House would recollect that then all the monarchs of Europe were desirous to emulate Louis XIV. in keeping up large standing armies, and that King William was a foreign prince, and therefore it was

natural that there should have been a degree of jealousy, under such circumstances, at that time. A great part of the same policy and jealousy prevailed in the time of the two first princes of the present family, and yet without a considerable standing army the people of this country must have fallen. What was the situation of this country at the present time? If barracks were not to be erected, what would be the situation of the large manufacturing towns? If dragoons were not collected easily, did the House imagine that the mischief that might be intended to be done by rioters could be avoided if the military were quartered in different public houses at a distance from each other, and if measures to prevent riots were not taken in a very early stage of them, they might become too strong to be prevented at all? He referred to the riots at Birmingham, in which a scene of plunder and mischief was known to have taken place, and he believed that, considering the disposition of the people there, if troops of dragoons had been in barracks in the neighbourhood, whatever might have been intended, it would not have happened as it did.

With regard to the disposition of the people in general, he did not believe that any considerable objections would be made to these barracks. In Warwickshire, where he resided, the inhabitants were perfectly satisfied with the plan. Besides, this was part of the policy of a state, in pursuing of which he saw not the smallest danger, but in a quite different light. He contended also, that there were no general rules of policy that might not require alteration from circumstances; and that was the view in which he saw the present measure. Indeed he saw abundance of reason for the present measure. When the standing army of France was placed on a very different footing from any that ever was before known in that country, and depended on principles entirely democratical, should we not put the British army upon another footing from what they had been? He maintained that we should. He believed indeed that the British army was now what it always had been, brave, loyal, and attached to the Constitution of this country. He believed that they were not now, or that they ever had been, infected with republican notions, at least ever since the time of Cromwell. God forbid they should. God send that they might preserve their attachment to the just equipoise of

the Constitution of this country. But soldiers were but men ; and when we knew that such pains had been taken to corrupt them — when we knew that the very institution of Sunday Schools had been made use of for that purpose — when we knew that Mr. Paine's book had been so industriously distributed amongst them — when we knew that, if barracks were not erected, that soldiers would be quartered in the lowest and the most infamous public houses, where their principles would be every day attacked, and their manners contaminated by the most vile associates — it was proper that some measure should be taken, and he confessed freely he knew of none better than the present, as well to avoid those evils as to prevent a disposition of mutiny. With respect to the observation that soldiers were certainly dependant on the throne, he should not say a word ; and as to the observations drawn from other times, he must say that he could not place much reliance on them ; besides, if what was said on that part of the subject was quite correct, yet he would say it was no rule to us, for those days were very different from the present ; and as there was no clamour at present in the country against this measure, he must regard it in all respects proper, and therefore he would oppose the motion.

Mr. COURTENAY said he had listened with all the attention and deference which he thought it his duty to do to the noble Lord who had just sat down, and to the honourable gentleman who had preceded him, and neither of them had advanced any thing that had convinced him of the impropriety of the motion of his honourable friend. The noble Lord indeed had said, that the motion was out of time, because no estimate of the expence, or plan of the extent of the barracks in question, had as yet been laid before the House. Mr. Courtenay said that this seemed to him to be an Irish mode of arguing, for it went to establish it as a principle, that we were to have the barracks first, and then to have the estimate of the expence, and plan of the extent of them. This was certainly a new mode of allowing the House of Commons to judge of the propriety of the measures of Government ! The next point that came from the noble Lord was, that politics in this country were not to be stationary, in which he had the honour to concur with his Lordship ; for he found that politics were

not to be stationary with men, nor were men to be stationary in politics. At most, the only point on which they were so was, that they sat with him and his honourable friends on that side of the House : this, however, was excusable, for the other side was already too much crowded.

With regard to the necessity of these barracks, as the noble Lord had not, nor had the honourable gentleman, given a satisfactory reason for their being erected, he was constrained to seek it from another quarter, and it had occurred to him that these buildings were to be regarded as a sort of military nunnery to preserve the chastity of our soldiers, and that it was thought that they ought to be strongly locked up, and that they were only to look through gates and iron bars. Here being some murmurs, Mr. Courtenay observed there was no indelicacy in his intention, for he had taken the thought of a very celebrated and chaste English poet, John Dryden, into whose works he had lately looked, and where he found a passage applicable to the advantages of these barracks to the soldiers.

For it is of a nature so subtle,

That, unless it is guarded with care,  
The odour will fly through the bottle,  
And the spirit impregnate the air.

He was of that opinion ; and Mr. Courtenay said he could wish that the noble Lord was in such a situation as to propose something that would preserve our soldiers in the barracks from corruption. The noble Lord, however, had tarnished the character of the army, by supposing that a soldier could be corrupted by the principles to which he had alluded. Mr. Courtenay said, that, in so observing, a slur was thrown upon the character of the British soldier. But it had been farther observed, that the French principles would contaminate our army, if left out in different quarters, and therefore barracks became necessary, and the reasoning ran thus :—that they had already corrupted the citizens, and therefore it became necessary to take care of the soldiers. To this Mr. Courtenay said he objected, because he conceived it to be introducing an insidious artificial distinction between a citizen and a soldier in this country, a thing at all events to be avoided, because it was on the union of the two characters every thing excellent in our

military depended. As to what had been said on barracks, and the propriety of erecting them, and that the soldiers would not murmur at it, and such observations, he knew the nature of barracks a great deal too well to assent to such doctrine; he knew that soldiers regarded the living in barracks as a thing to be avoided, if possible; they knew well enough the hardships they endured, and regarded it as an invidious distinction to be in barracks, when they compared their situation with that of those who were out of barracks; and he knew too that a British soldier did not like that a distinction should be made between him and his brother soldier: this would create animosity between the soldiers, for it was the nature of mankind to hate those who were in a better situation than themselves, when they were sure there was no reason to regard them as inferior to the objects of favour.

The noble Lord objected to an authority quoted by his right honourable friend, because little reliance could be placed on it. Mr. Courtenay said, he should quote another authority, to which he believed there would be no objection: it was the distinguished author of the Spirit of Laws, Montesquieu. That great author said, "that so jealous are the people of England of standing armies, that they are only voted from year to year; but they never suffer men to lay in barracks, because that would be making a distinction between citizens and soldiers, by separating soldiers from the mass of the people, and accustoming soldiers to consider themselves as a distinct body, they would thereby be the more readily brought to act against the people."

But the army of France, it seemed, were democratical, and therefore a different system was to be adopted with respect to our soldiers. What was to be understood by this? Was it that the army of England was to support despotism, and that for that purpose barracks were to be erected all over the kingdom?

He then enumerated the effects of barracks, both as to their internal management and the effect they might produce in the country, and the manner in which they might perhaps be employed; first, to overawe the people, and afterwards finally destroy their freedom.

As to their having acted upon the system of barracks in Ireland, he did not think that a reason why it should be adopted in this country ; there was a difference between this country and Ireland, which reminded him of the opinion given by the late Mr. Serjeant Davy, a celebrated lawyer, who had said, that as Ireland was in a state of actual slavery, there was nothing remaining to be done, but to subdue the spirit of the inhabitants ; to make the whole a system of secure despotism ; and he knew of nothing that would effectuate this, but by erecting barracks all over the kingdom.

He then took notice of the wishes which had been expressed by many persons in the country for barracks for soldiers. No doubt there were. Publicans, on account of the burden that would be taken off ; and the worthy gentlemen of the different Associations---men who had no principle of morality or virtue in general, and who cared for nothing, nor had any thing in view, but their own interest.

The next point was the observation with respect to the advancement of lawyers, and the power of the Crown to provide for them, as had been alluded to by the honourable Secretary at War. It was thought by the Crown, and no doubt justly, that a lawyer's conscience was more tender than that of any other, and therefore whenever he abandoned the principles of justice, he was to be rewarded the more for it, in proportion as the people might despise him for sacrificing his professional reputation. But if he should appear regardless of his reputation as a professional man, despise the most obvious principles of natural justice ; forsake all pretension to honour or to honesty---lend his name to the most contemptible paltry trick, then he was entitled to be placed at the head of his profession. In short, a lawyer had a sort of Taliacotion conscience, which was well understood by the Court, and treated accordingly ; he meant in the instance of Judge Jeffreys in the reign of Charles II. and Mr. Justice Scroggs ; but God forbid he should allude to the present time.

Upon the article of augmentation in the army, under the head of Staff Officers, great as that was, he believed the country would regret that there was not one more added to the number in that honourable station ; a more gallant, able, esteemed, and distinguished Officer, he believed there was

not in the service. [This alluded, we believe, to Sir Charles Grey.]

Lord MULGRAVE paid the highest compliments to the character of the British soldiers, and expressed his astonishment, that it should once have been thought that they would consider their being in barracks as a punishment, when they knew that it was part of their duty to submit to it as military characters. He knew they would submit without a murmur to what they had undertaken on their entering into the service. He expressed his astonishment also, that the mutiny act should be deemed as fastening any slavery on a soldier ; it was an act that formed a material part of the Constitution of this country, and was such as was absolutely necessary for the well-being of the State. His Lordship took notice of the quotations taken from the speeches of Mr. Pulteney and Mr. Pelham, by the honourable gentleman who now brought this subject before the House, and seemed to be of opinion that little reliance could be placed on the labours of those who so irregularly attempted to report the debates of that House, inasmuch as the reasoning in the reports of these speeches, appeared to his Lordship to be quite absurd. He expatiated upon the necessity of barracks in the present situation of affairs, and upon their military use, and concluded that, from his own experience, he could assure the House he never knew of any one evil occasioned by them.

Major MAITLAND explained ; and said he did not mean to say, that being stationed in barracks was absolutely a punishment in a military sense ; but that soldiers would regard it in that view, upon comparison with the situation of other soldiers. He disclaimed also all thoughts of intending to convey any reflection on the army, when he said they were dependant on the Crown.

Mr. BURDON said, that as a Magistrate, he had felt the want of barracks last summer in the part of the country where he resided. In corporate towns, where there was a more regular and efficient police, tumult and insurrection might be prevented by the civil power, but in towns of a different description, which had become populous by trade or manufacture, the aid of the military was often necessary ; and Magistrates being unwilling to send for troops till the last necessity,

because the people on whom they were to be quartered, though them a burden, mischief was sometimes done that might have been prevented. In all such places barracks would obviate the difficulty. He was therefore against the motion.

Sir GEORGE HOWARD reprobated the bringing forward of questions day by day, reflecting on the conduct of Ministers, at a time like the present. Some gentlemen seemed to wish, that Ministers had been withheld from going to war with France, when from the conduct of France, it was evident, that war could not be avoided. The time was such as to call upon every man to exert himself in support of a Constitution which had existed unchanged for one hundred years, and he could not but express his abhorrence of motions made on such an occasion, that tended only to embarrass Ministers, and weaken the public confidence in their integrity. Of Mr. Pulteney, whose opinion had been quoted, he would mention an anecdote. In Sir Robert Walpole's administration, when a message from the King informed the House, that Spain had declared war against England, Mr. Pulteney said, that whatever might be in his opinion of Ministers he should hold himself unworthy of a seat in that House if he did not join heart and hand in enabling them to oppose the common enemy; he wished the same declaration had been made by opposition on the war with France. He firmly believed that for two years past a regular systematic plan had been pursuing by persons in this country, in concert with persons in France, to produce the greatest mischief that this country could sustain. But the great majority of the people of this country, if they could be polled from East to West, and from North to South, would be found firmly attached to the Constitution of their ancestors. They had yet religion among them. They had not declared themselves Atheists. Such arguments had been held in the House of Commons as might have been expected to be used if five or six Members of the French Convention had been admitted to the bar to plead the cause of France. He could not be ignorant of the disposition of the army, in which his whole life had been spent. He had served nine campaigns abroad, and must know something of those who served with him. He could not admit that officers of the army were more to be suspected of undue attachment to the Crown than any other de-



scription of men. Both officers and privates were zealously attached to the Constitution. He concluded with again deprecating the agitation of questions, tending to lessen public confidence in Ministers. Let them now be supported in defending the country, and when the proper time came let them be impeached if they had acted wrong.

Mr. FOX said, that all his respect for the right honourable General, could not prevent him from answering, that the advice he had just given, if the House were to follow it, would prove a complete suspension of the most valuable functions of that Constitution which he was so anxious to defend. If when the country was brought into danger, they were to say, that they would agitate no questions but what Ministers chose to agitate, that they were in no instance to examine their conduct, but to commit the whole management of public affairs implicitly into their hands, they should betray the trust which their constituents had reposed in them, they should relinquish the most imperious of their duties, namely that of watching, and when necessary controuling the servants of the Executive Power, and the practice of our Government would be any thing, but what it had formerly been, and what he hoped it would long continue. His honourable friend was not to be blamed for the motion he had made. It arose out of the conduct of Ministers; and to that conduct, not to the mover of it, was it to be imputed. He had as high an opinion of the integrity, the honour and principles of the officers of the British army, as the right honourable General: but he would not pay them a compliment at the expence of the Constitution. He would not sacrifice to them that jealousy, which it was the duty of the House of Commons to entertain of every set of men, so immediately connected with the Crown. To the Crown they must look for promotion, by the Crown they might be dismissed from their profession without any cause assigned, and to the Crown they must be attached in different degrees from men on whom similar motives did not operate. This attachment arose from the situation in which they were placed, it applied to them collectively as a body, and was no disparagement whatever to any of them as individuals. To the Crown it was said Lawyers must look for promotion, the Crown could give and take away silk gowns, but the Crown could

— neither give nor take away the fair emoluments of a man's abilities in his profession. The silk gown would bring but few, if any clients, and as few would the loss of it take from the barrister of reputation. The honourable General had said that he had served nine campaigns abroad, and what the honourable General would not say, with great honour to himself and advantage to his country. Now after all his campaigns, and the very considerable emoluments with which they had been rewarded, would the honourable General say that His Majesty might not dismiss him from all those emoluments, for no reason but because he happened to differ in political opinion from his Ministers, were such a difference ever to take place? If he could not say so, then it was clear that they were held at the pleasure of the King and his Ministers, and that such being the situation of all military officers, they were fit and necessary objects of the jealousy and vigilance of the House of Commons, as were, indeed, in a greater or less degree, all persons whatever employed by the Crown. Late events had added much to his jealousy in this respect. They had seen officers dismissed without any reason assigned or assignable, except theoretical opinions, which they were supposed to entertain.— These officers had been allowed to receive the price of their commissions: but was it nothing to be turned out of their profession, on which they had founded all the hopes of their future fortune? Besides, they might not have been allowed to sell, if His Majesty's Ministers had thought fit so to advise him, and therefore all the officers of the army knew, that they were so far completely at the mercy of the Crown; and that men who had shed their blood in the service of their country might be deprived, not only of their rank and their hopes, but robbed of the money with which they had originally purchased their commissions. While Ministers and their friends were praising the Constitution, and deprecating innovation, they themselves were introducing a system for the disposition of a standing army, which had been always held incompatible with the safety of public liberty, and always opposed. Was the time and the occasion to be ever a conclusive argument for all that refused to do, and for all that did? When to repair any breach that time had made in the fabric, when to reform an existing abuse in the practice of the Constitution was proposed, their answer

was, "What, will you meddle with the Constitution at such a season as this; will you endanger the whole for the sake of a part, that may safely wait for a remedy till a more convenient opportunity?" When they themselves proposed not reform, but innovation, the answer was the same, "Consider the occasion; will you oppose a measure which the time loudly calls for?" There was not now, it was said, the same reason for being afraid of a standing army, as when William III. a foreigner, was on the throne—an absurd argument in his opinion; but admitting it to have any weight, were we to give up the principles of our constitution, and a most leading one was the jealousy of a standing army, because the King was a native? On His Majesty's accession, it had indeed been insinuated that the Constitution, at least in practice, was to be very different from what it had formerly been, a doctrine for which he could never see any reason, and which he hoped never to hear revived. Was there not as much reason to be afraid of barracks now as in 1740? Was there more cause for jealousy of a standing army, when we were menaced from abroad, and dreaded the invasion of a Pretender to the throne? Yet at that period Mr. Pulteney and Mr. Pelham opposed erecting barracks, and they said well; for the mixing the soldiers with the people, by which they imbibed the same principles, and the same sentiments, was the best security of the Constitution against the danger of a standing army. But it was said the soldiers could not mix with the better sorts of people to learn their political opinions. It was quite sufficient if they were on a par in their opinions of the Constitution with men in the same ranks of society from which they had been originally taken. But supposing that there were any force in this argument, would confining them apart in barracks give them access to better conversation and better opinions? It was entirely new to say that the military was necessary to the execution of the civil power. The Constitution acknowledged no such auxiliary. For the exercise of the civil power, the means were always in force; and the very preamble to the annual mutiny bill, which some people considered as bombastic, expressly stated, that a standing army, in time of peace, without the consent of Parliament, was against law, If Magistrates neglected to call in the military when their assistance was necessary, they did not do their duty. If there were

places where the existing police was insufficient, let means be tried to remedy the defect, but let it not be pleaded as a reason for keeping up a military force; for of all sorts of police, a military police was the most repugnant to the spirit and the letter of our Government, and ought to be the last that ever Parliament should adopt. It was not true that the building of barracks was acceptable to all the country. There were places where it was considered, not as a benefit, but a grievance. It might be that publicans were glad to be relieved from having troops quartered upon them, but that proved nothing; and if they were all of the same opinion they ought not to be allowed to sell their permanent security for a temporary convenience. There were various instances of something like a design on the part of Ministers to teach the army to look solely to the Crown, without regard to the House of Commons. One of these was the increase of the soldiers pay last year, without first consulting Parliament, and before Parliament had met, an increase which the King had no authority to give till voted by the House of Commons. The King had the sole command of the army. Why? Because it was given him by the House of Commons; but it was their exclusive privilege to say whether or not there should be any army, what its number, and what its pay. He was still old fashioned enough in his notions of Government to dread a standing army, and to think that the conduct of it could not be watched with too much caution. He did not clearly understand the argument of the noble Lord near him (Beauchamp) who seemed to say that the standing army of Louis XIV. was the ground of our ancient jealousy of a standing army, and that France had now an army of another kind, of which she was not jealous; we, as matter of *ton*, should be no longer jealous of ours. Wishing always to speak with the utmost respect of His Majesty, and applying his censure of measures only to his Ministers, he would not pay him so absurd a compliment as to say that the Constitution was more secure under him than under his two august progenitors. What motive could then be assigned for being less jealous of a standing army now, than in former reigns. Looking back to the conduct of Sir Robert Walpole as a Minister, whatever might be his faults, no man would now accuse him of having ever entertained the

thought of trenching on the Constitution by means of the army; yet the utmost jealousy of a standing army had subsisted during his administration. Were our present Ministers more constitutional than Ministers of those times? Were they more to be relied upon than the man who had a principal share in settling the Constitution at the revolution, and was consequently attached to it from opinion, from honour, and from affection? Were they fitter to be trusted than some of the noble Lord's ancestors, who made part of the administration at the period alluded to? Had he in his new zeal to support them, discovered that the manner in which they came into power was better, or their respect for the opinion of the House of Commons greater? He could discover no ground for his Lordship's giving to the present Ministers a superior degree of confidence, unless, perhaps, that hope was a stronger principle than gratitude. While we professed to adhere to the Constitution, as transmitted to us by our ancestors, we ought also to adhere to the maxims on which they exercised it, one of which was, never to allow the army to become a distinct set of men from the mass of the people, by being separated from the people in barracks. Next came the argument, that the measures of Ministers were not to be questioned, because we are at war. Mr. Pulteney he had never considered as his political model, although he had done on the present occasion what Mr. Pulteney did on the declaration of war against Spain—given his support to Government in the measures necessary for carrying on the war. But did Mr. Pulteney, when he made that declaration, tie himself up from inquiring into the particular acts of Ministers? So far from it, that whoever would take the trouble of looking into the journals, would see that the opposition of that time, with more industry and much more success than the present opposition, had brought forward motions of censure on the Minister, and divided the House on them.—They said then, as he and his friends said now, “We will support the Minister against the foreign enemy, but we will not support him against Great Britain.” This erecting of barracks was not a measure of war, but a measure of peace, for it was undertaken before Ministers began to talk of war, and it affected this country and no other. From the whole of their conduct there was at least as good ground to suspect them

of improper designs as any that the honourable General had mentioned for suspecting him, and those who acted with him. In one point he differed from his honourable friend who made the motion. When the money for the expence of these barracks came to be voted, he should oppose it. He knew he should be told that the expence was already incurred, and that it would be hard to refuse payment to men who had given their property or their labour on the faith of Administration. This was a difficulty which the practice of Ministers, in incurring expences without the sanction of Parliament, rendered frequent; but difficult and ungracious as it was to refuse to pay, he would prefer doing that to betraying the Constitution. If they felt any respect for the Commons, if any for the people whom they represented, they would take care that the people should be free, not in form but in substance, and that such innovations on their ancient maxims, or, if they chose to call them so, their ancient prejudices, were not attempted till their representatives were consulted. He wished not to revive the subjects which the House had already debated; but surely, if the whole country had been alarmed on points still disputable, it was not being too delicate to feel alarm on such a measure as that now in debate, unless they could persuade themselves that a seditious pamphlet was pregnant with every possible danger, but a standing army perfectly harmless. He knew not whether the House had lost its former jealousy of a standing army; he knew not whether the people had lost theirs; but if they had, it was the duty of their representatives to endeavour to revive it; and he should therefore vote for the motion.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he should not have occasion to trouble the House much at length. He should not enquire what was the proper rule of the support which gentlemen might think proper to give to Ministers. All he should say was, that he did not wish the general situation of the country, or the war in which we were engaged, to prevent the examination of the measures, which, in his opinion, that situation called for. As little would he discuss the degree of jealousy that ought to be entertained of a standing army. That, like other undefined phrases, calculated to agitate the minds of men, had been on former occasions very successfully employed to excite popular clamour. It would be as unsuccessfully employed now, if

any man, or set of men, chose to have recourse to it : for the people were too loyally and too zealously attached to the King and the Constitution, to be moved by such artifices. If by a standing army was meant, an army kept up without the authority or consent of Parliament, that indeed would be an object of jealousy ; but if by it was meant an army voted from year to year, regulated and paid by Parliament, according to the practice of the constitution, it was no object of rational jealousy. Much of the clamour excited against a standing army in 1740, had been raised by men whose object was not merely to weaken the hands of Administration, but by removing the army, to bring in the Pretender, and destroy that very Parliament whose power and authority they attempted to magnify. The use then made of popular words ought not to be forgotten. The right honourable gentleman coupled the erecting of barracks with a supposed system of Ministers for passing by the House of Commons, and extending the prerogative of the Crown, and challenged the right honourable gentleman, or any man, to produce an instance where the functions of Parliament had been invaded, or where the prerogative had been extended beyond its known constitutional limits. The bread-money to the private soldiers, now brought into question, had been debated last year, and the objection now made to it not mentioned at all, or only faintly hinted at. If it was such an invasion of the functions of Parliament, why were those who thought themselves the only guardians of the people's rights then silent ? But giving the soldiers that money, was only giving them what they were before entitled to by the votes of Parliament, and what the King had therefore a right to give them. It had been originally withdrawn by an erroneous warrant, and the error had grown into practice. Money, it was true, was wanted to provide the necessaries which the money withheld had been formerly applied to purchase, and for that money His Majesty's Ministers came to Parliament.

The propriety of erecting barracks had been so well and so eloquently defended by gentlemen who had gone before him in the debate, and particularly by a noble Lord near him, (Lord Mulgrave) that but little was left for him to add on the subject. The circumstances of the country were such as made it necessary to adopt that mode of lodging the troops in a greater

extent than formerly, and it had always been adopted as circumstances required. But although it had been a measure entirely new, he should not have been deterred by any fear of innovation from doing that which he considered as essential for the safety of many parts of the country. He denied, however, that it was an innovation. The principle was so little new and so little dangerous, that in all places where troops were in general stationary, barracks had been long since erected. Let them look at London and Westminster, let them look all along the coast, at Chatham, at Portsmouth, at Dover, at Plymouth, &c. &c., and in Scotland; at Edinburgh, at Stirling, at Fort William, at Fort George, at all these places the troops were lodged in barracks, and no danger had hitherto been either felt or apprehended. The circumstances of the country, coupled with the general state of affairs, rendered it adviseable to provide barracks in other parts of the kingdom. A spirit had appeared in some of the manufacturing towns, which made it necessary that troops should be kept near them. In these towns then, to dispose of the troops in barracks, was a plan far better than to distribute them among the mass of the people; where jealousy might rankle into hatred, and produce tumult and disturbance, which, from the present plan of keeping the army separate, would be effectually prevented. It would also operate as a preventive of the seduction of the army, who were by certain persons considered as the chief obstacle to the execution of their designs. He sincerely wished that such an army might exist, whose sentiments should be in exact unison with the sentiments of the great body of the people. An attempt had been made to corrupt the commonalty, and therefore there existed an additional reason for adopting measures to prevent the army from catching the contagion of opinion. In Edinburgh an attempt had been made to excite a spirit of mutiny and disaffection among the soldiers. It had, however, failed of effect. The honourable gentleman had accused him of acting with *hauteur*, when he had mentioned his intention of bringing forward the present discussion. But he retaliated the charge, and asserted, that the modesty lay with him (Mr. Pitt) and the *hauteur* with his opponent. Feeling, as he did, the greatest veneration for the honourable gentleman's eloquence and abilities, it well became him to be modest, when it was



his misfortune to be pitted against so formidable an antagonist. He was not, however, to be deterred from duty, even by the dread of his superior talents, but should firmly persevere in that line of conduct, uninfluenced by the splendor of his eloquence, and unawed by the terror of his menaces. Even the production of a red Morocco quarto, where he had fortified his own opinion, by the authority of Mr. Justice Blackstone, had not been able to effect his conversion. He concluded, by moving for the order of the day.

Mr. TAYLOR rose in reply, and said, that in the course of the Minister's speech, he had heard no answer to the arguments which had been adduced in support of his motion by his right honourable friend (Mr. Fox), and therefore he should take no notice of any part of Mr. Pitt's speech that related to the erection of barracks, but should confine himself to that part of it in which the right honourable gentleman had thought proper to indulge his spleen towards him, (Mr. Taylor) and had endeavoured to make his motion appear ridiculous to the House. He could assure the right honourable gentleman, that no malignity of his, 'however it might be accompanied with brilliant talents, should ever deter him (Mr. Taylor) from stating, in plain and intelligible language, his sentiments upon great national questions like the present; and he should always speak with the firmness of an independent man. He said, it was matter of surprise to him that the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) should accuse any gentleman of a want of modesty; for he could assert that there was more arrogance in the conduct and manner of the right honourable gentleman, than in that of any man alive. He then vindicated the terms of his motion, upon the authority of Mr. Justice Blackstone, and shewed that he had couched it in the most unexceptionable terms.

Mr. GREY thought it necessary on so momentous a question as the present, to trouble the House with a few words, though he feared their attention was already nearly exhausted by the length of the debate. The right honourable gentleman had asserted, that there existed in this country a desperate faction. These were words which conveyed a serious charge, and might upon some future occasion be made the subject of inquiry and discussion. He could not help remarking on the unfair dexterity which the right honourable gentleman had

exerted in the dissection of his honourable friend's (Mr. Taylor's) arguments. He had asserted, that because no specific complaint had been made against the erection of any particular barracks, such a measure must, of course, have been congenial to the feelings of the people, and conformable to the sentiments of their ancestors. But it must be recollected, that although no complaint had been urged against any particular measure, the opposition to the general plan of erecting barracks had been unvarying and undeviating. He (Mr. Pitt,) had also expressed a wish, that a British army should partake of the feelings, and be in exact unison with the sentiments of the general mass of the people. But if he was sincere in this wish, he had taken means not to execute, but to thwart and counteract his intention. For surely mankind were much more prone to assimilate their opinions to those with whom they were in the habits of constant intercourse, than to others with whom any commerce was partially interdicted by a seclusion of their persons. By confining the troops in barracks, instead of parcelling them out among the people, their sentiments would be estranged from the general modes of thinking which prevailed among their fellow citizens; and thus the seeds of a direct contrariety of opinion would be sowed by those very means which the right honourable gentleman professed to think would be productive of an uniformity. He had also said that the objections to a standing army during a former period, were made only by the factious and discontented, by the enemies of the present establishment, and the adherents of the exiled family. Such a description, however, did not apply to all the opposers of that measure, since the late Earl of Chatham was amongst the most strenuous of them. An exception to which the right honourable gentleman would doubtless subscribe. Mr. Grey concluded, by censuring the erection of barracks, as a measure, new in its principle, and dangerous in its consequences.

Mr. FOX spoke a few words in vindication of Mr. Taylor, whose arguments (he averred) had been unfairly represented.

The order of the day was carried without a division.

The House adjourned.

*Monday, 25th February.*

The bill for making the same provision for the wives and children of persons serving in the militia as substitutes, as is allowed to the families of those who serve in the same, in consequence of their having been drawn by lot, was read a third time.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS observed that some gentlemen were of opinion, that the bill, as it then stood, would have a prospective operation only, so that no other substitutes could derive any advantage from it, than those who should enter the militia, after it should have passed into a law. If such were to be really its effects, the object which he had in view would be in a great measure defeated, for he meant that the provision made in the bill for the families of substitutes, should extend to all those who had entered the militia since the day it was embodied in consequence of His Majesty's late proclamation: to remove all doubt, therefore, and effectually to secure the object at which he aimed, he had prepared a clause for giving the bill a retrospective, as well as prospective operation, and he moved that the House would give leave to bring it up.—Leave was accordingly given, and the House having approved of the clause, ordered that it should be tacked to the bill by way of rider.

Mr. SHERIDAN reminded the House that some time ago he had given notice of his intention to make a motion on the subject of the sedition or seditious practices said to have been then existing in this country. Since that time, he observed, several circumstances had occurred, which had induced him to postpone his motion from day to day. Since the date of this notice, war had actually broke out, and it did not appear to him proper to interrupt the important debates upon that great question, by the introduction of any other of comparatively less importance. But this had not been his only motive for delay; several prosecutions had been commenced on account of the seditious practices, to which his motion was to refer; and he had been of opinion that pending these prosecutions, he ought not to bring forward any proposition on the subject. At present, these causes of delay either no longer existed, or were on the point of being removed; the House had definitive-

ly decided upon the question of war ; and as to the prosecutions, many of them had been brought to a conclusion, and the remainder, he presumed, would be disposed of in the course of the present week ; he therefore thought that he might now without farther delay fix the day on which he meant to make his motion : he gave notice therefore, that he would make it on Monday next. He begged leave beforehand to request that gentlemen would come prepared to discuss with temper the question which he should propose ; and he was confident that if they would display as much temper on the occasion as he should, there could be little doubt but they would agree with him in the conclusions which he should draw from the facts and arguments which he should state to them on that day.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS rose merely to mention that he himself had fixed upon Monday next, and had communicated his intention on that subject to many Members, for taking into consideration the report of the resolutions which he should have the honour to move this evening in the Committee on the State of the East-India Company. He hoped, therefore, the honourable gentleman would leave him in possession of Monday, and that any other day would equally serve his (Mr. Sheridan's) purpose.

Mr. SHERIDAN replied, that he understood the right honourable gentleman had fixed upon Friday next for the report of the resolutions respecting the East-India Company ; and this it was which had made him (Mr. S.) make choice of Monday. However as any other day would answer his purpose just as well, he was willing to leave the right honourable gentleman in possession of that day, and he himself would take the day after.

Mr. Secretary DUNDAS admitted that his original intention was to report the resolutions on Friday ; but that he had afterwards changed his mind, and fixed upon Monday, for the purpose of allowing gentlemen more time for considering them, before they were called upon to confirm them. However as a day was no great object to him on the occasion, he would leave Monday to the honourable gentleman, and bring up the report of the resolutions on Tuesday.

The House resumed the consideration of the report of the

resolutions proposed on Friday by Mr. T. Grenville, for calling over the House on the 6th of March.

Mr. T. GRENVILLE observed, that a right honourable gentleman (Mr. Pitt) had expressed a wish, that the resolution respecting the taking Members into custody might be so altered, as to allow Members to state before the call, the causes which would put it out of their power to attend the call: his object in forming this wish was, that gentlemen who had such excuses to make as the House would probably deem sufficient, might not be put to the great inconvenience of coming up to town from the public service in which they might be engaged in the country, or exposed to the hardships of being taken into custody, before their reasons for absence should have been heard. Mr. Grenville said he was very ready to gratify the wish of the right honourable gentleman on this head; his only difficulty was, how to word the resolution, so as to answer the proposed end, by allowing Members to make excuses previous to the call, as well as subsequent to it. After some farther observations, he proposed an amendment to the resolution, for allowing gentlemen to make previous excuses on Wednesday and Monday next. He begged at the same time it might be understood that gentlemen not making excuses on those two days, were not to be precluded from doing so any time before their names should be reported to the House as absent on the 7th or 12th of next month.

The amendment was agreed to, and the resolution thus amended, together with the other resolutions respecting the call, and the ballots was confirmed by the House.

The House resolved itself into a Committee, Mr. Hobart in the chair, for the purpose of taking into consideration the various accounts presented by the East-India Company.

Mr. DUNDAS said, it is now six years since I introduced the practice of bringing annually before a Committee of the House of Commons, a statement of the situation of affairs in the provinces of India; a measure which has tended to establish a regularity in their accounts, to enforce an accuracy in their estimates, and, by subjecting the several civil and military establishments to a jealous investigation, has answered my most sanguine expectations, and been productive of all those salu-

tary effects, which must ever attend publicity in matters of account and revenue.

The statement I now propose to lay before you is different in its object, and must, of course, be different in its nature, from those I have hitherto troubled you with. Those of former years, except in one instance, have been confined to the state of the financial affairs of the Company in India, exhibiting the balance upon the comparison of the revenues and charges of the several settlements. The present is to be a statement of a more comprehensive nature. I mean to combine together the affairs of the East-India Company at home and abroad, pointing out their relative effects upon each other, and placing before you the general balance resulting from such a combination.

For this purpose, it will be necessary for me to draw your attention to a variety of different considerations. I must first state the amount of the Indian revenue, with the annual burthens upon it, including the amount of interest payable on the debts in India. By this statement you will perceive, what is the surplus applicable to the purposes of commerce, or the liquidation of debts; and as the exports from this country to India, form a part of the general applicable fund in India, that subject must, of course, enter into the detail.

Having ascertained the amount of applicable surplus in India, I shall, in the next place, advert to the effect which such a sum, applied to the purchase of goods in India, would produce on the sales at home; and, attention being likewise paid to the circumstances of the China trade, the result of the two, combined together, will give the gross amount of the Company's sales in Leadenhall-street.

From that gross amount must be deducted the charges of customs, freight, and the other burthens to which the trade is liable, so as to shew, on the whole, what is the net commercial surplus, arising from the excess of sales above the prime cost of, and all charges on, the goods sold by the Company.

Having established, as clearly and accurately as I can, those necessary preliminaries, I shall conclude with suggesting, what I conceive to be an equitable application of the surplus arising both from the revenues and trade; due attention being

paid to the respective claims and interests of the East-India Company and the Public.

And first, with respect to the revenues and charges of the several settlements in India.

No accounts having been received from India, since the termination of the late war, of the revenues and charges on the present peace establishment, I must first refer the Committee to the statement of the revenues and charges of the British provinces in India, previous to that war. For this purpose, in No. 5, Appendix \*, the amount of revenues is given for three years, 1787-8 to 1789-90; and of the charges, as far as the same can be ascertained: but it appears from the notes to this account, that in some instances, the charges incurred could not be accurately distinguished, as the amount annually paid included arrears of former years:

The Revenues of Bengal on this average amounted to - - - C. Rs. 5,45,41,067 at 2s.	£ 5,454,107
Of Madras, to Pags. 32,41,171 at 8s.	1,296,468
Of Bombay, to By. Rs. 13,08,047 at 2s. 3d.	147,155
	<hr/>
	£ 6,897,730

#### CHARGES.

Of Bengal, C. Rs. 3,13,12,102	£ 3,131,210
Of Madras, Pags. 39,45,914	1,578,365
Of Bombay, By. Rs. 46,59,047	524,142
	<hr/>
	£ 5,233,717

Add Expences of Bencoolen, and Pinang - - - -	50,000
	<hr/>
	£ 5,283,717

The Net Revenue on this average is - - - £ 1,614,013

In these years a considerable expence was incurred by preparations for war, and therefore the average cannot be considered as giving the result too favourable.

The countries ceded by Tippoo at the termination of the war, are estimated to yield a revenue of about 400,000l. no

\* For the different papers to which Mr. Dundas refers in the course of his speech, vide the Speech and Appendix, printed for J. Debrett, Piccadilly.

part of which could be included in the above average. But in order to bring this subject under one point of view, there is laid before the House an estimate of the future revenues and expences of the several settlements in India, formed by a Committee of the Court of Directors for the use of the proprietors of India stock.

Considering the circumstances under which this estimate was formed, it is more likely that the calculation of the net surplus is made below, rather than above, its probable amount. Indeed, in every instance, the revenues appear to be taken on a very low statement; particularly in the article of salt at Bengal, which, on the average of five years, has produced 987,000*l.* per annum, and is here estimated to produce only 725,000*l.* or 262,000*l.* per annum less than the average of the last five years.

In like manner, great caution has been used in stating the other articles, that there should not be any doubt of the result being better than the estimate.

In this estimate the commercial charges at the several settlements are stated as charges upon the revenues. In all former views of this subject, they have been considered as belonging to the trade, as that is the only purpose for which they are incurred.

By the estimate the revenues are stated at	£ 6,963,625
And the charges, including commercial, at	5,342,575

Leaving net revenues	- - - - -	1,621,050
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In this view, the net revenue of India appears to be 1,621,050*l.*; or, if the commercial charges, amounting to 104,450*l.* be excluded, the excess of revenue, above the civil and military establishments, is 1,725,500*l.*

As I mean, not only on this, but on other occasions, to draw my conclusions from this estimate, I shall offer a few farther observations upon it:

It has been usual, on some former occasions, to charge the Directors of the Company with endeavouring to exhibit too favourable a view of the state of their affairs; and perhaps the deranged state of their accounts some years past, left them so unacquainted with their real situation as to give some countenance to such an imputation. At present, however, the case



is totally changed ; even the estimates of the annual receipt and expenditure have, as has been fully proved on former occasions, been brought to an extraordinary degree of accuracy ; and every year a comparison between those estimates and the actual result, has been laid before this House and the Public. There is not, therefore, now any apprehension of the state of the Company's affairs in India being misunderstood from the confusion of their accounts ; nor is there any fear of unknown claims being hereafter brought forward. As a proof of this, I need only refer to No. I. where a sum of no less than 210,636l. is stated as a debt at Bengal in January 1792, which consists of bills from other presidencies not due, and bills not presented for acceptance. As these bills would not become due until some future date, it has been usual, in former instances, to consider them as burthens upon the future resources ; but in order to ascertain the correct amount of all outstanding demands upon the treasuries abroad, all existing claims at the time the accounts are made up, whenever they may become payable, have been ordered to be included among the actual debts. This, of course, precludes every apprehension of the revenues being anticipated, to satisfy claims not brought forward.

In order to place in a stronger light the moderation with which this estimate is formed, and indeed the probability of its being much under what may actually be expected, I refer the Committee to the particulars in No. 5, which, compared with the present estimate, will shew that most of the articles of revenue are underrated.

The salt, I have already mentioned ; and not to detain the Committee with enumerating each article, I shall just state the receipt and expence of each presidency, on an average of three years, compared with the present estimate.

	REVENUES.		CHARGES.	
	Average of Three Years.	Present Estimate.	Average of Three Years.	Present Estimate.
Bengal	£. 5454107	£. 5033000	£. 3131210	£. 3047000
Madras	1296468	1540000*	1578365	1600000
Bombay	147155	390625†	524142	541125
Excess of expences at Bencoolen and Pinang	£. 6897730	6963625	5233717	5188125
	—	—	50000	50000
	—	—	5283717	5238125

\* Including 140,000l. for the revenues of the country ceded by Tippoo Sultaun.

† Including 250,000l. for ditto.

Hence it appears, that although the ceded countries are stated in this estimate at 390,000l., the total of the revenues is only 65,895l. more than on the three years average. And although I am ready to admit that some deduction should be allowed from the average revenues of Bengal, on account of the high price of salt in those years, yet, on the other hand, an addition ought to be made to the average revenues of Madras. These, it will be observed, in the first year of the average, are exclusive of the revenue of the Guntoor Circar, and in the last year the Company's servants had but just obtained possession of it, and but a very small proportion of its estimated revenues was collected. The land revenues of this Presidency, however, in 1789-90, were increased from fifteen to nineteen lacs of pagodas, or upwards of 160,000l.

Another circumstance which tends to lower this average is, the failure in the subsidy from the Rajah of Tanjore, the payment of whose kists was not enforced in the latter year; and, instead of four lacs, he paid less than two, being a difference of more than 80,000l.

Taking, therefore, these circumstances into consideration, as lowering the average revenues of those three years, and comparing it with the present estimated amount, including the ceded countries, there can be no doubt but that the revenues are very moderately stated, and indeed I may say considerably below what they will probably amount to. But in this, as in other instances, I prefer, that the actual result should exceed the expectations held out, and therefore take the revenues at the sum above stated.

With respect to the charges, the difference between the amount on the average of the three years, and that stated in the estimate, being only 45,592l., requires but little observation farther than to remark, that as the revenue from salt is stated so much below its former actual amount, and as this in part arises from a smaller quantity being supposed to be sold, the expence of manufacture should of course be proportionally reduced. The preparations for war also at Madras, in 1789-90, appear to have made a considerable increase of charges there, as they were raised from thirty-eight lacs of pagodas, the amount in 1788-9, to forty-three lacs, being an increase of upwards of 200,000l. This increases the average, and is an

addition to the amount at which the expence would have been stated for times of profound peace.

The countries ceded by Tippoo will occasion a small additional expence in the charges of collection ; but considering how much the acquisition of them has weakened that enemy, against whose ambitious projects we were obliged to be almost continually in a state of warlike preparation, instead of there being a necessity for our keeping up a larger military establishment in time of peace, there is every prospect of our being able to reduce it. The means of defence, also, with which those countries abound, on the part adjacent to Tippoo's remaining dominions, afford still farther security against any future attempts from him to disturb the peace of the Carnatic. On the whole of these considerations, I have no hesitation in giving, as my opinion, that the military expences may be reduced below their amount previous to the late war, and consequently, in stating the total of the civil and military charges at 5,238,125*l.*, I take them above what they will, in all probability, amount to in future.

These several circumstances are sufficient to prove, that the net revenues on the whole of this estimate are taken below the amount, which there is every prospect of being realised.

### INTEREST ON THE DEBTS.

The next subject for consideration is, the amount of the debts in India, as the interest on them is the first object to which the net revenue is applicable.

The total of debts owing in India on the 31st of January, 1792, is stated in No. 1, at current rupees 9,08,45,508, or 9,084,550*l.* ; this includes every article of debt known at that period, and, as I have already observed, the bills not due or presented for acceptance are considered as part of the debts then owing, which was not the case in former statements of this nature.

The war continued about a month after this date, which, together with the charges attending the return of the troops to their respective stations, would consequently cause an addition of expence ; but against this is to be placed the amount to be received from Tippoo, as the Company's share of the price of

peace, being 110 lacs of rupees, or about 1,200,000l.; of this about 500,000l. has been given as a tribute to the merits of the army under the Marquis Cornwallis. The remainder would be applicable, as it was received, towards defraying the arrears of the army. Besides this, a greater proportion of the land revenues in India is collected in the three months from January to April, than in any other quarter of the year.

In taking the total of debts, therefore, at their amount on the 31st of January, 1792, I state them at a sum probably greater than they were at the termination of the war. The amount of debts bearing interest in India, at this date, is stated in the latter part of No. 1, and amounts to current rupees 6,93,39,432, or 6,933,943l., the interest on which was current rupees 59,22,097, or 592,209l.

The amount of interest on the debts at this period was greatly increased by loans having been raised in the preceding year, for the purpose of supplying the exigencies of the war, at 12 per cent., which is the common interest in that country, but is more than the Company pay on their paper, except on such extraordinary occasions. The sums thus raised amounted to about 450,000l. at Bengal, and 350,000l. at Madras, (making together 800,000l.), which, immediately on the termination of the war, the Madras Government began to pay off; and, as appears on the note on the side of the account, pagodas 4,85,000, (194,000l.) of these loans there had been paid off, which lessened the interest about 21,700l. The additional credit which our Governments in India must have acquired by the successful termination of the late war would soon enable them not only to pay off those loans at so high a rate of interest, but speedily to reduce the rate upon the whole debt.

As a proof of this, I refer to the state of affairs before the late war broke out, when the certificates at Bengal were issued at six per cent. interest; of which, as per No. 1, to the amount of 509,657l. were outstanding on the 31st January, 1792.

In the estimate adopted by the Court of Directors, already referred to, the interest on the debts in India is given, allowing for the amount actually known to be paid off. The amount of the principal is 6,669,082l., and of the interest on it 561,923l. Although the reasons I have stated would warrant the taking a less sum as the interest now payable on the debts

in India, to avoid any objection of that nature, this amount is taken as a charge at present upon the revenues of India ;

Therefore from	-	-	-	£. 1,621,050
Deducting for interest	-	-	-	561,923

The net surplus, after defraying the civil, military, and commercial charges, and interest on the debts, is

£. 1,059,127

Besides this sum, there is estimated to be supplied from the sales of Europe, goods and certificates, 350,000l., making a total of 1,409,127l.

In the note to the estimate it is observed, that the receipts for the sales of imports, and for certificates, “ on the average “ of the three last years, have produced 301,000l. ; but it is “ apprehended that stores to a considerable amount, supplied “ for the armies at Madras and Bombay, have not been “ brought to account. That the estimate for 1791-2 amounts “ to 412,000l. ; and that from the late regulations the import “ trade with India, it is hoped, may be much benefited.” On this it may be observed, that the regulations alluded to were adopted in August, 1789, in consequence of a plan presented by a Member of this House, then in the direction ; and the last sales stated in this account, as per No. 6, were from 30th of April, 1790, to 1791, at which period they could have but little effect ; the amount, however, for that year was 330,627l., for sales of import goods only, which considerably exceeds the preceding year’s sales.

The exertions which the Company have made to extend their export trade are stated in the Reports of the Select Committee of the Court of Directors on this subject, before the House, and the success of those exertions appears on a reference to No. 25, in which the amount of goods, stores, and bullion, exported to India and China, is stated from 1776 to the present time. The increase of export goods only, since 1784, has been from below 400,000l. per annum, to 800,000l. and of stores in nearly an equal proportion, being on the whole an increase from 400,000l. to 1,000,000l.

In the estimate here referred to it is supposed that to provide an investment in India should be applied £. 1,127,000  
 And that the supplies towards the China investment should be - - - 250,000

£. 1,377,000

This would leave a small sum of 32,127l. in India.

In regard to the amount supplied from India to China, it appears by No. 7, that on the average of three years to 1791, 223,314l. per annum has been supplied from thence towards the China investment; but in the present view of the subject the mode of remitting the surplus seems only in so far applicable, as it tends to shew with what profit it can be realised at home.

The amount of the goods from India sold in the

last three years has been, per annum	-	£. 2,394,751
Prime cost of ditto	-	£. 1,090,185
Customs	-	563,269
Freight and demurrage	-	245,782
Charges of merchandise, six per cent.	-	143,684
Total	-----	2,042,920

Being, on the average, an excess of the sale above the prime cost and charges - £. 351,831

I do not call this the actual profit on the trade from India, because, in a mercantile point of view, the interest of the money employed in that trade, and a sum for insurance, should be allowed; but this excess of the sale value above the prime cost and charges sufficiently proves that the remittance of the surplus revenue, through the medium of the trade, is a profitable mode, and that it may be realised at home with profit both to the Public and the Company.

On the average of the last three years, the prime cost of goods sold by the Company was	-	£. 1,090,185
In the Directors' Report the cost of the annual investment is estimated at	-	1,127,000

Which exceeds the average cost of the goods sold those three years by - - - £. 36,815

The debts for bills on the Court of Directors, for customs, freight, demurrage, interest, and dividends unpaid, and various other ar- ticles in their commercial concerns, amount, as per No. 24, to				—	—	2,454,579
Which being deducted from the above amount, leaves a debt to be provided for of				—		3,946,444
If bonds be kept in the market to the amount of						1,500,000
The debt remaining to be paid off at home is						2,446,440

In what way this small debt is to be discharged, must depend on what determination the East-India Company shall form, on a suggestion which has been lately made to them.—There are two ways of discharging it, either by increasing the capital one million, which there can be no doubt of rapidly doing, either by the present proprietors subscribing in proportion to the stock they respectively hold, or by admitting new subscribers to advance the amount.

The other method is by instalments, to which, considering the smallness of the debt to be ultimately discharged, a very moderate sum only need be appropriated. I certainly, in every point of view, give the preference to the first mode, both as tending to an immediate liquidation of the debt, and as it will enable the Company, by an additional capital, to extend their export trade to the utmost the Indian or Chinese market will admit of.

If the proprietors shall adopt this idea, they will have a just claim to receive an additional dividend, amounting to ten per cent. on both the old and new capital; and after allowing for this, there would still remain a sufficient sum to admit the Public to a participation of not less than 500,000l.



The appropriation of the surplus would then stand thus :

Net estimated surplus	—	—	£.1,239,241
To be applied towards the discharge of the debt transferred from India	—	£.500,000	
Increase of dividend two per cent.	—	—	100,000
New capital of 1 million, at ten per cent.	—	£.100,000	
(Supposed to reduce the bonddebts to 1,500,000l.)			
The interest at present on bonds is	—	128,000	
1,500,000l. at 4 per cent.		60,000	
Less interest on bonds	—	68,000	
Increase of payments by new stock	—	—	32,000
To be paid to Government	—	500,000	
		—	1,132,000
		Remains	107,241

This result leads me to mention to the Committee, an idea I have for a considerable time entertained in my own mind, and which I have recently suggested for the consideration of the East-India Company. My opinion certainly is, that the whole of the estimate of the Court of Directors is taken too unfavourably, and that the surplus of revenues in India, and the commercial surplus at home, will exceed what I have calculated upon in the appropriation I have just mentioned. If I shall appear to be right in this opinion, there must be an ulterior appropriation of the additional balance, and that appropriation should be for the purpose of vesting in the hands of the public that additional surplus, to remain there without interest; but the Public to be answerable for it to the proprietors, if, from calamity, permanent or casual, the capital of the Company should be impaired, or the situation of their affairs should not at any period be able to afford the dividend on the capital, which it is now suggested they should receive.—Without farther enlarging on the idea at present, I content

myself with barely mentioning it; at the same time, I am confident that if such an arrangement could be made, it would be a most wise and salutary measure, beneficial to the Public, and highly so to the East-India Company. The effect of such a measure, in the course of eight years, will appear from an account, which, it will be observed, proceeds on the ground of the Directors' estimate, and must of course receive additional vigour from every increase to the prosperity of their affairs.

It will naturally be asked, if the calculations I have submitted to the Committee, will not, in a great degree, be affected by the continuance of war? Undoubtedly they will, to a certain extent; but I flatter myself, by no means to the extent which gentlemen may at first sight be apt to suppose; for I hope, from the situation of the country with which we are engaged in war, that it is not likely we shall be much disturbed on the continent of India; and from our naval superiority, I likewise flatter myself that the interests of the East-India Company and the Public may be protected from any material injury by depredations of another nature. I conclude with submitting to the Committee the following resolutions, founded on the accounts referred to them.

“ That it appears, That, on an average of three years, 1787 to 1789-90 inclusive, the revenues of the several presidencies of Bengal, Madras, and Bombay, have amounted to six millions eight hundred and ninety-seven thousand seven hundred and thirty pounds per annum, and the charges incurred in the civil and military establishments, as far as can be ascertained, to five millions two hundred and thirty-three thousand seven hundred and seventeen pounds per annum, valuing the current rupee at two shillings, the star pagoda at eight shillings, and the Bombay rupee at two shillings and three pence.

“ That it appears, That, allowing fifty thousand pounds per annum for the expences of Bencoolen and Pinang, the net revenues of the British possessions in India, on the foregoing average, have amounted to one million six hundred and fourteen thousand and thirteen pounds per annum.

“ That it appears, That the revenues arising from the countries ceded to the Company by Tippoo Sultaun at the termina-

tion of the late war, stated in the treaty at thirteen lacks, Sixteen thousand seven hundred and sixty-five pagodas, and which countries are estimated, by the Court of Directors, to produce three hundred and ninety thousand pounds per annum, are not included in the foregoing average amount of revenues.

“ That it appears, That the future revenues of the British possessions in India are estimated, by the Court of Directors, to amount to six millions nine hundred and sixty-three thousand six hundred and twenty-five pounds per annum, and the civil and military charges (including one hundred and four thousand four hundred and fifty pounds for commercial charges) to five millions three hundred and forty-two thousand five hundred and seventy-five pounds per annum.

“ That it appears, That the net revenues of the British Provinces in India, after defraying the civil, military, and commercial charges, are estimated, by the Court of Directors, at one million six hundred and twenty-one thousand and fifty pounds.

“ That it appears, That the debts owing by the East-India Company at the several settlements in India amounted, on the 31st day of January 1792, as near as can be ascertained, to the sum of nine crore, eight lacks, forty-five thousand five hundred and eight current rupees.

“ That it appears, That the amount of the debt, bearing interest on the 31st day of January 1792, was six crore, ninety-three lacks, thirty-nine thousand four hundred and thirty-two current rupees, and that the amount of that interest was fifty-nine lacks, twenty-two thousand and ninety current rupees; but that, from later advices, the amount of debt bearing interest is stated by the Court of Directors at six millions six hundred and sixty-nine thousand and eighty-two pounds, and the amount of that interest at five hundred and sixty-one thousand nine hundred and twenty-three pounds.

“ That it appears, That, after deducting the interest payable on the debts in India, from the excess of the revenues above the civil, military, and commercial charges, the net surplus is estimated at one million and fifty-nine thousand one hundred and twenty-seven pounds per annum.

“ That it appears, That, on the average of the three last years, from the 1st day of March 1790 to 1793, the prime cost

of goods sold by the East-India Company has amounted to two millions five hundred and fifty thousand seven hundred and twenty-eight pounds per annum; that the customs payable on those goods has amounted to six hundred and twelve thousand two hundred and thirty-one pounds per annum, the charges of freight and demurrage to seven hundred and seventeen thousand four hundred and fifty-three pounds, and the charges of merchandize to three hundred and six thousand one hundred and eighty-five pounds per annum, making the total of Prime cost and charges four millions one hundred and eighty-six thousand five hundred and ninety-seven pounds per annum.

“ That it appears, That the goods sold by the Company in the last three years, on an average, have amounted to five millions one hundred and three thousand and ninety-four pounds per annum, which exceeds the prime cost and charges by nine hundred and sixteen thousand four hundred and ninety-seven pounds.

“ That it appears, That the prime cost, and several charges of customs, freight, and charges of merchandize, of the goods to be sold by the East-India Company, are estimated, by the Court of Directors, to amount to four millions two hundred and forty-four thousand six hundred and ninety-eight pounds per annum.

“ That it appears, That the sales of goods by the East-India Company are estimated, by the Court of Directors, to amount to four millions nine hundred and eighty-eight thousand three hundred pounds per annum, which exceeds the prime cost and charges by seven hundred and forty-three thousand six hundred and two pounds.

“ That it appears, That the charges and profit on private trade, on the average of the last three years, have amounted to eighty-three thousand three hundred and ninety-three pounds per annum, and are estimated, by the Court of Directors, to amount to seventy thousand pounds per annum in future.

“ That it appears, That the net surplus on the whole of the ~~revenues~~ and trade of the East-India Company, after paying eight per cent. dividend on the capital stock of five millions, is estimated, by the Court of Directors, to amount to one million two hundred and thirty-nine thousand two hundred and forty-one pounds per annum.

“ That it appears, That, in the last three years, two millions eight hundred and twenty-one thousand one hundred and eighty-three pounds of the principal and interest of the debt transferred from India to England, has been discharged by the East-India Company.

“ That it appears, That the debts owing by the East-India Company at home, under the head of annuities, bonds, bills of exchange, customs, and debts contracted in the ordinary course of their commercial transactions, are calculated to amount, on the 1st day of March, 1793 (including one million three hundred and fifty-four thousand and fifty pounds of debt transferred from India) to ten millions six hundred and one thousand and sixty-nine pounds, exclusive of the capital stock.

“ That it appears, That the effects of the East-India Company in England, and afloat outward, consisting of the amount due from Government on annuities to the Company, cash in the treasury, goods sold not paid for, goods unsold, cargoes afloat, and other articles in their commerce, are calculated to amount, including the balance of quick stock in China, to thirteen millions fifteen thousand four hundred and forty-nine pounds, exclusive of four hundred and twenty-two thousand and eleven pounds, charged as expences incurred on account of French prisoners, in an expedition to Manilla, and for hospital expences.

“ That it appears, That the value of assets in India, consisting of cash in the treasuries, of bills receivable, of goods provided to be shipped for England, of goods imported to be sold in India, of Salt, opium, &c. and of stores for use or sale, amounted, according to the latest advices, to four crore, nine lacks, eighty-four thousand and fifty-one current rupees, exclusive of the debts stated to be owing to the Company there, amounting to the sum of three crore, fifty-one lacks, eighty-three thousand nine hundred and thirty-two rupees.”

Mr. HUSSEY wished to know, in what shape the right honourable gentleman intended to bring forward his resolutions?

Mr. DUNDAS replied, in any shape that could prove most favourable to discussion.

Mr. HUSSEY said, the right honourable gentleman had triumphed on the consent which his plan had obtained in another place; but his triumph would have been somewhat diminished if he had considered that such consent had been bought by the addition of two per cent. on the capital of the East-India Company, and an exclusive Charter.

Mr. DUNDAS spoke a few words in reply.

The House adjourned.

*Tuesday, 26th February.*

Mr. M. A. TAYLOR said, he was happy to understand from some gentlemen concerned in the regulations respecting the Newfoundland trade, that they were not disposed to resist a measure which he intended to propose, and therefore he should not be under the necessity of troubling the House for more than a minute or two this day on that subject. The act relating to the Newfoundland trade was now expired; it contained clauses, which, if introduced into the new bill that was to be brought in, would, in the opinion of his constituents, be highly prejudicial to their interests, in particular, and to those of the trade in general: the truth of this opinion they were ready to establish, and he was glad to find that the gentlemen on the other side of the House, were willing to afford them an opportunity; as both parties were disposed to discuss the matter fairly and fully, all that remained for him to do was to put it in such a way, as would best answer their common wish; he then moved,

“ That a Committee be appointed to inquire into the state  
“ of the trade to Newfoundland, and to report the same; as  
“ it shall appear to them, to the House,” which passed in the affirmative.

He next gave in a list of Members, and moved that they should form the said Committee. This motion also passed without opposition.

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, that the important subject of the slave trade had been so often and so fully discussed, that he thought it totally unnecessary for him to introduce any argument upon the general question. He stated, that the motion which he was going to make, was in his opinion so much a motion of course, that he did not suppose any serious opposition

would be made to it. An honourable Baronet indeed (Sir W. Young) had given notice that he meant to oppose it; but as the honourable Baronet since had time to reflect more deliberately upon the business, he trusted that he would abandon such a design, and suffer to pass unopposed the motion which he was about to make, and which was no more than a preliminary to the renewal of the resolutions, which were carried last year by a considerable majority. He then moved,

“ That this House will on Thursday next resolve itself into  
“ a Committee of the whole House to consider of the circum-  
“ stances of the African slave trade.”

Sir WILLIAM YOUNG, pursuant to the notice given by him on a former day, rose to oppose the motion; he said, that reflection, instead of making him desist from his opposition, had served only to confirm him in an opinion that the great question of the slave trade ought not to be agitated at present, but that it would be prudent to defer the discussion of it to some more proper season. Men's minds, both at home and in the West Indies, were at this moment too much heated for a sober and cool deliberation on so important a question. In England, and in that House, many exaggerated accounts had been given of the situation and treatment of the negroes, both before their departure from the coast of Africa, and after their arrival in the islands; by these accounts the passions of the House had been excited to decide against the dictates of judgment and sound policy. He said that exaggerations were by no means necessary to render the slave trade odious; for he was ready to admit, that in its principle it was not to be defended, and must necessarily be repugnant to the feelings of mankind; but such were the circumstances of our West-India colonies, that the continuance even of such a trade for some time longer was absolutely necessary to their existence, and its abolition would be their ruin. On this subject he said he could speak from his own knowledge, for during the last summer he visited most of the English islands in the West Indies, and he could take upon him to say, that a great deal of what he had heard in that House in the course of the last session, respecting the treatment and condition of the negroes, appeared to him to be unfounded in fact. It had often been said that by the irregularity of number of males and females imported into the

islands, and the excessive labour to which they were exposed, very few children were reared, and that this was the reason that it became necessary to import so many Africans every year. He declared, that having viewed the negro villages on many estates, he had seen as many children in each, as could be found in any village of the same size in England. This would serve to shew that the necessity of importation might be gradually diminished; and the plantations be worked by Creole Negroes, instead of Africans. The condition of the slaves had of late been considerably mended; the act for regulating the middle passage had been productive of very happy consequences; and many regulations had been adopted in the Colonial Assemblies, tending greatly to better the condition of these poor people. He maintained that in whatever related to the slaves and slave trade, this country could not act with efficacy, without the concurrence of the Legislature of the islands: these bodies were extremely well disposed to do every thing that could reasonably be required at their hands; and more it would not be prudent to ask. He believed that there were not in His Majesty's dominions a set of subjects more loyal than the land-owners in the West-India Colonies; but he could not answer for the continuance of loyalty, when the men from whom it was expected were to be irritated, outraged in their character, and injured in their property. They had been represented as brutal and unfeeling in their nature; many of them had been bred at the first schools in England, and were known when here to be equal to the most humane or generous of Englishmen. Few men were patient of insults; and still fewer disposed to be strongly attached to those who would reduce them to beggary: there was a spirit moving among the planters, to which it would not be prudent to give strength: by unnecessarily pushing forward certain measures at the present moment, they might be driven to what they themselves would wish to avoid. He concluded by moving an amendment, viz. that the words "Thursday next" should be left out, and the words "This day six months" inserted in their stead.

Mr. BUXTON rose, and seconded the motion for the amendment; he said that the House by giving way to the clamours without doors, instead of stedfastly and firmly adhering to principles of wisdom and sound policy, might lay the foun-



dation for the ruin of our happy Constitution. Gentlemen ought to be on their guard against a spirit of innovation? Liberty was not now in danger from its arch enemy despotism, but from those, who under the appearance of erecting a temple to liberty, were actually endeavouring to destroy it, to overturn all Government, and establish anarchy upon its ruins. In England it once happened, that when the people seemed most clamorous for liberty, the mace of the House of Commons was declared to be a bauble, and the resolutions of the House dictated by an armed force from without. He warned gentlemen against similar consequences, if they should shew so little firmness as to be swayed by clamours without doors, raised by persons, who, under the idea of universal liberty, would destroy society.

Mr. CAWTHORNE said, he would wish to recal to the recollection of the House the speech of the honourable gentleman who made this motion, on a former occasion, when the last resolutions on this subject were adopted by the House.—Their passions had then been agitated, and their feelings of humanity called forth, by details of cruelties by which sensibility was shocked. Had not these stories been told and believed by the House, he was persuaded they would not have agreed to the resolutions: and they had now been proved to have had no positive existence in fact. The honourable gentleman being called upon to mark those persons to whom he chiefly alluded, had particularised one person (Capt. Kimber,) who had, in consequence, been apprehended, committed, brought to trial, and honourably acquitted by a jury of his country: The two principal, indeed only, witnesses, brought forward to support the prosecution, had been committed by the Court on suspicion of wilful perjury, in giving evidence on that trial; and they had both lately been tried: one of them had been found guilty of the perjury; the other had been acquitted; but Captain Kimber's innocence had been established beyond a doubt: upon the whole view of the case, he was decidedly in favour of the amendment proposed by the honourable Baronet.

Mr. MONTAGU did not conceive it possible that the House could go from the resolutions which they had formerly come to, upon the most mature and deliberate consideration,

on such slight grounds, or rather on no grounds at all. Could he apprehend that this were possible, he should feel himself called upon to enter much at large into the subject ; but to suppose this, would be to impeach the consistency of that House, than which, nothing should be held more sacred in every legislative assembly. In the present business, it was of the first importance to have some resting place ; and he deprecated the setting it afloat at present to agitate the mind of the Public, which delay, or even hesitation, might do.

Mr. W. SMITH paid a compliment to the ability and candour of the honourable Baronet who moved the amendment ; but he seemed to him to have entirely forgotten the state of the question at present. It was not now intended to make any alteration on the resolutions of last session, or to proceed to an immediate abolition of the slave trade ; but only to renew those resolutions, and to carry them up to the Lords, so as the business might proceed before their Lordships ; nor did it occur to him why the negociation with the West-India islands, alluded to by the honourable Baronet, might not be carried on, while the evidence was taken in the House of Lords. He next adverted to what an honourable Member (Mr. Cawthorne) had said on the subject of Captain Kimber. He had paid the greatest attention to the whole of that business, and he could state, from his own knowledge, that it had been misrepresented in every particular. His honourable friend (Mr. Wilberforce) had not brought forward the prosecution of Captain Kimber. The acquittal of Captain Kimber had proceeded upon the collateral fact of the perjury of the witnesses in support of the prosecution, as to matters totally unconnected with his guilt or innocence, and only tending to impeach the credibility of their testimony. These witnesses had since been tried, and the first was indeed found guilty of perjury ; not, however, on the ground of having said any thing untrue in what he had sworn against Captain Kimber ; but from its being proved that he had made use of expressions which, on giving his evidence, he had denied. He was sorry, for the credit of Captain Kimber, that the issue of the other trial had been very different ; for there it was necessary to go fully into the case, and to prove the truth of what the defendant had sworn against Captain Kimber. Of this he brought such clear and positive proof,

that the learned Judge, before whom the cause was tried, was completely satisfied, before the evidence for the defendant was nearly concluded, and directed the jury to acquit him, which they accordingly did. If gentlemen thought the point rested at all upon this, he would beg of them to read the trial with attention ; but, in his mind, it was of little importance, as he thought the question rested on much broader ground ; he would therefore strenuously support the original motion.

Mr. CAWTHORNE, in explanation, said, he did not mean to say that Mr. Wilberforce was the author, but the occasion of the prosecution brought against Captain Kimber.

Mr. ESTWICK thought that references to cases of trials not before the House, was improper ; and that when a man had been acquitted by his country, he should not be still represented as not purged from the guilt of the charge,

Mr. DENT was of opinion, that the House ought not to go into a Committee on the subject of the slave trade ; for though the resolutions passed last year contained various restrictions, the enemies of that trade avowed that their object still was its unqualified abolition. He wondered that gentlemen would endeavour to force upon the West-India planters, principles which, however they might be suited to England, were destructive of the property of the planters. People should be prepared for liberty before they could enjoy it, or make a good use of it. This had been allowed even by a champion for liberty in France, the famous Mr. Rabaud de St. Etienne, (a Protestant clergyman in the National Convention) that the same liberty and constitution which were fittest for France, would not suit her West-India colonies.

Lord SHEFFIELD, in vindication of Captain Kimber, said, that his counsel had eighteen witnesses to produce in his behalf, but had been prevented from examining them by the Court and jury, upon this ground, that no farther testimony was requisite to prove his innocence ; he might therefore be said to have been acquitted on the merits of his case.

Mr. FOX observed, that the question now was, Whether that House would not proceed, and at once lay it down as a rule that they would do nothing whatever upon the present subject this session of Parliament, although, after a long discussion, deliberate resolutions had been entered into in the last, and al-

though the subject had been in agitation for between five and six years ; and although they had from that time gone on from year to year, and had, as it was natural in the cause of justice, reason, and humanity, arrived by discussion nearer and nearer to the point of truth, and had from step to step advanced, until they came to a determination that the slave trade from Africa to our colonies and plantations should cease on the 1st of January, in the year 1796. That was the object now before the House. He then called the recollection of the House to the circumstances of the present subject, and dismissed all the arguments that had this evening been brought forward on the hardships to which the planters would be exposed on revival of these resolutions, by observing, that on the bringing forward of the bill by an honourable Baronet, (Sir William Dolben) for the regulation of the middle passage, these gentlemen and their advocates cried out, that if this bill passed, the trade would be ruined ; had that been true, the House would not be debating the subject now before them ; as little reliance had the House on the suggestions of these gentlemen with respect to the dangers to the trade from the resolutions of last year ; and the question was now, whether the House would or would not go into a Committee on Thursday upon this subject.

It was said that the abolition should be with the concurrence of the legislative body of our colonies, before it could be effectual. Upon what principle it was that we were to anticipate their refusing to concur with us, he knew not, or that if we had no means or influence whatever over them, and that they were determined to thwart our intentions, how far it might be deemed prudent for us, under such circumstances, to continue our connection with them, he would not now discuss, but of this he was sure, that the House had power over the trade of this country, and could say under what regulations it should be carried on, and when it should cease, or how long they would suffer by an acknowledged evil. He adverted to the observation that this trade was to be abolished by menaces, and maintained that nothing at any time, particularly at this, ought to be more strongly guarded against than that of holding out to the Public an idea that the proceedings of that House were influenced by dread of me-

naces, reproaches, or even the loss of popularity ; and that their votes were the effect of compulsion, and that the moment they dare do so, they would rescind such votes. He trusted to God that the vote of every one who assented to the resolutions of last year, was the result of his conviction of conscience ; he trusted too, that a vote, so much to their honour, and which had entitled them to the applause of all Europe, would not now be abandoned. He said he had heard it hinted, that a time of war was improper for the discussion of this subject ; he confessed he did not see the propriety of that objection ; at all events, if it was an objection at all, it was such as would be very well discussed in a Committee ; and then it might be determined whether the circumstances of this war were such as to call upon Parliament to continue the evil of the slave trade ; he should be of a contrary opinion, and contend that all the arguments upon the danger of tumult and insurrection, would not apply to the present subject. He therefore should advise the House to regard the present as a very fit time to take this subject up, and to shew to all Europe that the Parliament of Great Britain never lose sight of the principles of honour, justice, and humanity.—That their Government is honourable—that their pledge is faithfully adhered to ; that when they declare they detest anarchy and confusion, they also love the principles of real liberty ; that they sincerely wish for the happiness of mankind, and revere the rights of nature ! He then observed, that if there were any objections to the late resolutions in any particular part, such objection would come regularly before the Committee on Thursday, and should then be argued, for as to the danger of agitating it, he confessed, he differed entirely from those who expressed their apprehensions upon that subject ; or if there was any danger in that respect, it must arise from its not being agitated while there was a difference of opinion ; agitation was necessary to set that difference at rest. Indeed he once hoped that the House would not now have had to debate the question at all, for that it should by this time have passed into a law. He should not now pretend to anticipate the discussion of the House of Lords ; he hoped, that their decision would be agreeable to the principles of justice and humanity ; in the mean time the House of Com-

mons should not slacken its efforts upon that subject. If the course of the discussion in the other House should lead to such length, or should take a turn that would render hopeless the thought of its coming to a conclusion this session, then he should advise the bringing forward of some other measure that might give efficacy to the resolutions, which had for their object the immediate regulations of the trade, independent of the total abolition in the year 1796.

He next took notice of the trial of Captain Kimber, on which so much stress had been laid; he said, he could have wished that it had not been alluded to at all, because it was not regularly before that House; but, as it had been alluded to, he would only say, in the most constitutional language he could, that, as Captain Kimber had been acquitted, he hoped and trusted that he was innocent, and, as Mr. Devereux was acquitted also, he hoped and trusted that he was innocent: but he believed there were none in that House who voted for the resolutions last year solely upon the representation of the subject which brought Captain Kimber upon his trial; if there was, let such person vote, if he thought proper, against the resolutions in the Committee upon this occasion; at all events the House had no reason for refusing to go into the subject this session.

Upon the point of humanity, which had been so much urged on a former occasion in favour of the West-India planters, i.e. must do the honourable gentleman who originated this subject in that House the justice to say, that he had always allowed to these observations their full force, and that he had admitted the truth of many specific acts mentioned in support of the humanity of these planters; at the same time, Mr. Fox said, he did not see any thing in the nature of the traffic of these planters, or any thing in the spirit of slavery, to suppose that those who deal in it surpass their fellow creatures in the offices of tenderness and humanity, nor any thing in the nature of absolute power that was likely to exempt its possessors from the common frailties of our species; or if these gentlemen had these feelings in so eminent a degree, these resolutions were so far favourable to them, as to set them free from a station so obnoxious. To return to the point more immediately before the House, he complained of an

evil and an abuse which he maintained it was practical to remove, and as he had before hinted, if the proceedings of another place should be such as not to give satisfaction, that they would be removed, and that the first resolution for abolition in 1796, should pass this session, then that House should substitute such other remedies as might meet their ideas upon the regulation of the trade between this time and the period of final abolition. Until these points should have been fairly canvassed by argument, he trusted that the House would not pursue a step so disreputable to its own honour and dignity, so dissatisfactory to the Public in general, as to relinquish their former opinion, or, in other words, to tell the world at large, there was no sincerity in their declaration on a former day, and that they had completely given up even the gradual abolition of the slave trade, and that they never would resolve upon that measure at this or any other period.

Sir WILLIAM YOUNG said a few words in explanation.

Mr. GASCOYNE said, he applied to the honourable gentleman who had first brought forward this business, and desired to know, whether he intended to renew the resolutions of the last year; he said he did; and then he, Mr. Gascoyne, said jestingly, that he wondered a gentleman who had always declared he should never be satisfied with any thing short of a total and immediate abolition, could move for the revival of resolutions, that only went to effect that purpose gradually; to which the honourable gentleman said, that he should only move to renew the old resolutions of the House. Mr. Gascoyne said, he did not wish for any discussion of this subject at the present time, because he thought it was dangerous.—But as he thought, from what he heard from the right honourable gentleman near him (Mr. Fox) that something more than these resolutions was to be brought forward, he wished to ask, what was to be the nature of that measure. As to the old resolutions, he had himself not much objection to the renewal of them; but if the House was divided, he should certainly go with the honourable Baronet who had moved the amendment.

Mr. FOX explained by observing, that if the proceedings in the House of Lords should satisfy him that all the old re-

solutions shall pass, then he should not have any thing to bring forward; but if they should so proceed, that the subject may not come to any thing in the course of this session, then it would be necessary for that House to come to some other resolutions, for the purpose of meeting the ideas which the House entertained last session, upon the subject of immediate regulation.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, the mode of proceeding had been correctly stated by the right honourable gentleman (Mr. Fox.) He hoped there would be no difficulty in revoting the propositions voted last year; and that however gentlemen on either side of the question might have objected to these propositions, there would be no difference of opinion on them now. But by renewing the resolutions of last session, and sending them up to the Lords, no Member of the House was restricted from proposing such other measures, as the delay in the other House might seem to call for. If, for instance, the proceedings in the other House should seem to retard the final decision of the business beyond the period of the present session, it might be highly proper to introduce a bill to stop the aggravation of the evils of the slave trade, pending the discussion on the final abolition.

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, he meant only in the Committee to propose revoting the same resolutions that were voted last year. If the trial of Captain Kimber had been introduced into the debate, it had not been introduced by him. On that trial he should decline giving any opinion, because he, perhaps, was in possession of facts of which the House was not in possession. It had been said that he had introduced the motion violently and intemperately. He had originally taken up the subject with no other motive but that of exerting such powers as had been bestowed upon him by his Creator for his honour, and the cause of religion and humanity; and no opposition, no imputation, no want of success, should ever divert him from pursuing it.

The House divided on the question, "That the words "Thursday next stand part of this motion."

Ayes, 53; Noes, 61. Majority, 8,

Against Mr. Wilberforce's motion.



Mr. Chancellor PITT, after lamenting the vote to which the House had come, said there were various ways of bringing the business again before the House. That from the declaration of his honourable friend (Mr. Wilberforce) it was evident it would be again brought before them: and that as the most convenient way would be in the Committee, he should move to adjourn the debate till Thursday se'nnight, when a fuller attendance of Members might be expected.

Sir WILLIAM YOUNG said, he had taken no advantage; he had given notice of his opposition on the very first opportunity; he had repeatedly renewed that notice; and if gentlemen did not attend it was their own fault.

Mr. CAWTHORNE submitted to Mr. Chancellor Pitt, whether going into a Committee on the business as first proposed would not be inconsistent with the vote to which the House had just come.

The SPEAKER observed, that the House had only decided that the words "Thursday next" should not stand part of the motion. They had not decided that the words "this day" "six months" should be adopted in the room of the words rejected; and therefore might without any inconsistency adopt the words "Thursday se'nnight," or any other that might be proposed.

Mr. JENKINSON said, such notice had been given as to set aside all complaint of want of attendance. The abolition of the slave trade was a question which had better be let sleep for the present. He had stated his opinion more fully last year; he wished for the abolition, but not for the immediate abolition, nor for fixing the period at which it was to take place; and therefore he should vote against going into the Committee on any day this session.

Mr. Chancellor PITT said, he meant no imputation on the honourable Baronet (Sir W. Young;) but the thinness of the House was a proof, that notwithstanding the notice given by the honourable Baronet, no material opposition to going into the Committee was expected. As it was easy to see what the fate of his motion for adjourning the debate would be—if put now, he would withdraw it; more especially as there were other modes of bringing forward the business when

the House was fuller; and as he knew the intention of his honourable friend (Mr. Wilberforce) to persevere.

Mr. FOX said, it was for the honour of the House to adjourn the debate, or, by adjourning for the day, to postpone it. The amendment moved by the honourable Baronet, if carried, could only oppose a difficulty in point of form to reviving the subject: and as he was happy to hear that it was to be revived, it was more becoming to revive it in the most convenient form.

Mr. DENT said a few words, purporting that the House had not been taken by surprise.

Mr. WILBERFORCE said, he had never complained of the House being taken by surprize. He was indifferent about the fate of the present motion, for whatever that might be, he should bring the business before the House in some shape or other, on Thursday se'nnight.

Mr. Chancellor PITT withdrew his motion; and Sir William Young's amendment to the original motion was put and carried. The House adjourned.

*Wednesday, 27th February.*

The House, in a Committee of Supply, voted five millions and an half to His Majesty upon Exchequer bills; and the House being resumed, ordered the report to be received tomorrow. The House adjourned.

*Thursday, 28th February.*

Mr. BURKE, one of the Members appointed by the House for managing the trial of the impeachment now depending against Warren Hastings, Esq., informed the House, that, the Lords having met this day (before His Majesty came to the House of Peers) in the Chamber of Parliament, precisely at twelve of the clock, which is much earlier than their Lordships have usually assembled for the purpose of going into Westminster-Hall, their Lordships, without having given any intimation to this House of their intention to make this alteration in the time of their proceeding, went at about half an hour after twelve of the clock into Westminster-Hall, before a sufficient number of Members of this House were assembled for the purpose of enabling Mr. Speaker to take the chair—That,

under these circumstances, he (Mr. Burke) and such of the other Managers as were present in this House, thought it their duty to appear in the place appointed for the Managers in Westminster Hall, to be ready to go on with the trial, without waiting for the usual proceedings of this House on the days appointed for the trial, and that the Managers did accordingly appear in Westminster Hall, and the trial proceeded. And Mr. Burke desired to submit his conduct, and that of the other Managers upon this occasion, to the judgement of the House.

The SPEAKER took a view of the proceedings of the House, and cleared himself, and all its Members, and also the Managers, from imputation of delay in general with regard to their attendance on the trial of Mr. Hastings, or any remissness in that respect.

Mr. Chancellor PITT moved, " That under the circumstances above mentioned, this House doth highly approve of the conduct of the right honourable Edmund Burke, and the other Managers, for having taken such steps as enabled the Commons to proceed on the trial of the said impeachment." Carried *nem. con.*

Mr. BURKE returned thanks to the House for their support of himself and brother Managers.

Major MAITLAND brought up the report of the Committee appointed to inquire into the best mode for expediting the impeachment carried on against Mr. Hastings.

The report stated several circumstances, and the Committee recommended two things to the particular notice of the House; the one was, an early attendance of its Members on every day appointed for the trial. The other, to do all they could to obtain a greater number of days in each week, for that purpose, than had hitherto been given upon the progress of the present trial. It recommends also to the House to follow the precedent of Lord Strafford, on the 22d of March, 1640.

Mr. Chancellor PITT then moved, " That this precedent be read;" which being done, he moved, " That this House do meet as a Committee in Westminster Hall." These were the words of the precedent, by which the attendance of the House will be dispensed with on the trial. This motion passed *nem. con.*

A conversation of some length then took place, on the motion of Major Maitland, for a conference with the Lords, which was afterwards withdrawn. The House then proceeded to receive excuses for absence on the day of call.

The House adjourned.

*Friday, 1st March.*

Mr. BURKE said, it was not to be considered as matter of satisfaction to that House, that a great criminal (for so by the articles of the impeachment of that House he was intitled to call Mr. Hastings) should have so long eluded the public justice of this country. He wished, and he was sure the House wished, that no delay should take place upon this trial. He did not mean to say that the Managers should submit any proposition to the criminal, but he submitted to the House, whether they might not, on the next day of trial, state that the Managers had no objection to go on in the absence of the Judges.

The SPEAKER said, he did not mean to say that the Managers were authorized to make any propositions to the defendant, or to the Lords, upon the trial of Mr. Hastings, but there was no irregularity in their expressing in open Court, their readiness on their part to proceed, in the absence of the Judges; it would then rest with the Lords and the accused, either to proceed or adjourn.

On the suggestion of the Speaker, the House resolved,  
 “ That the Managers shall go from day to day to Westminster  
 “ Hall, as a Committee, when the Lords shall give notice of  
 “ their proceeding on the trial of Mr. Hastings, and that Mr.  
 “ Speaker be empowered to receive a message from the Lords  
 “ of their proceeding to such trial, although there be not 40  
 “ Members to form a House.”

Sir CHARLES MORGAN moved for leave to bring in a bill to restrain the employment of labourers in making navigable canals in the time of the corn harvest.

Mr. SHERIDAN said, it was impossible upon the first statement of such a measure, for him not to say he should oppose it. He was surprised that such a step should be attempted to be taken. If it was for the stopping the working of canals altogether in time of harvest, specifying that time, he should have no objection; but to say that a labourer should not chuse

for himself what he should be employed in, and to make the best use of his own labour, was so wrong in principle, so repugnant to justice, and so destructive to the practice of our constitution, that he could never think of consenting to it. Why not include all persons concerned in canals for that time? Why particularly select the labourer as an object of peculiar restraint?

These observations brought on a conversation which ended in the adoption of Mr. Sheridan's idea, for the word labourer was left out, and the leave was given to bring in a bill to restrain all persons from working on canals in the time of the corn harvest.

The order of the day being read for going into a Committee of the whole House, on the report of the Committee up stairs, as to certain proposed regulations relating to canal bills, the Speaker left the Chair, and Sir George Howard took his seat at the table.

Mr. POWYS presumed, that no objection would be made to adopting the resolution of the Up-Stairs Committee, with respect to regulating the transfers of shares, &c. in canal bills to be brought into that House.

Agreed to *nem. con.* and the Chairman directed to report it to the House.

Mr. POWYS, though he admitted that canals, in many instances, where highly beneficial to the commerce and manufactures of this country, was nevertheless of opinion, that a spirit of speculation, with respect to them, had late been, and was now so prevalent, as to make it prudent and proper in that House, by a general regulation, to guard against its being carried to an extent prejudicial to the interest of the public: he would, for this purpose, move a resolution, which he hoped would meet the concurrence of the Committee; That, in all canal bills, the tolls to be raised should be limited in such manner, as might best reconcile the interest of the Proprietors with that of the Public.

Mr. WIGLEY thought such a general resolution unnecessary, and moved that the Chairman do now leave the chair.

A pretty long conversation ensued, in which the Master of the Rolls, and several other Members, supported the propriety

of the resolution moved by Mr. Powys; while Mr. Hufsey, and many other gentlemen, contended for the great public utility of canals, and that it would be imprudent to check the spirit of adventure in private individuals, from the encouragement of which alone they were likely to be carried on.

The Committee divided on Mr. Wigley's motion for the Chairman leaving the chair;

Ayes	-	-	-	25
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Noes	-	-	-	21
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Majority against Mr. Powys's motion	4
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The House adjourned.









